

LIBERTY



Central School District

Fall 2011

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Liberty Celebrates End of Capital Project

With the snip of a ribbon, Liberty Central School District recently marked the completion of the \$35.8 million capital project approved by voters in 2007. Community members can tour the newly renovated facilities during an open house on Wednesday, Dec. 7, at 6 p.m.



Sights and Sounds: The capital project was celebrated with a ribbon cutting ceremony and music.

Celebrating a Milestone

The capital project celebration began with a breakfast reception, a slide show and musical performances by orchestra director Scott Glasser and senior Sydney Goldstein. The Liberty High School Honors Band, under the direction of Dan McConnell, performed as well.

Superintendent Michael Vanyo served as the master of ceremonies, and other speakers included State Sen. John J. Bonacic, Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, Liberty Board of Education President Daniel Parkhurst and Principal Jack Strassman.

"The building project will effectively assist our students to compete in the 21st century," Strassman reflected.

Students took part in the celebration as well, including Joshua Lieberman, Katherine Heinle, Kristen Niemann, Gabriela Quintanilla, Brendan Siegel, and Kane Sauchuk, who all helped with a special ribbon cutting (above).

Seeing the Results

The completed capital project included a

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A Happy Occasion: State Sen. John J. Bonacic (fifth from left) and Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther (center) joined students, staff members and community members for the capital project celebration.

Liberty Pride! at a pep rally



School Board Reduces Tax Levy for 2011-12

Costs may be rising for most public schools, but taxpayers' expenses are rising, too. With that in mind, the Liberty Board of Education decided to apply more of its appropriated fund balance this year to reduce the increase in local taxes for 2011-12.

"The Board of Education realizes that in these tough economic times, the district should do everything possible to help lessen the burden while still maintaining educational programs," explained Lorine Lamerand, business manager for Liberty Central School District.

Any money left over at the end of a school year, whether from spending less than originally budgeted for or from taking in additional revenue, is put into a fund balance. Part of that money, known as appropriated fund balance, may be applied to the budget for the following school year to reduce the amount of money that must be generated through a school tax levy.

In August, the school board reduced the increase in the school tax levy from 2.6 percent down to 2 percent

by applying an additional \$107,315 of appropriated fund balance to the 2011-12 school budget.

The school board made its decision after receiving the final tax equalization rates for the six towns that make up the district. Upon analysis, it realized that four towns – Liberty, Neversink, Rockland and Thompson – would see their school tax rates increase while the other two – Bethel and Fallsburg – would see a decrease. One of the

factors driving those differences was changes in assessed property values. While the district has no control over assessments, it can help taxpayers in other ways.

"Using more fund balance to help ease the taxes paid by our residents is one way that we can help. It is the reason the district has been so steadfast in ensuring we have a balance to fall back on when situations like this arise," said Lamerand.



Serving the Community: The Liberty Board of Education works with administrators on a variety of issues, including school taxes. Pictured are (front, l to r) Tania DeFrank, district clerk; Daniel Parkhurst, president; Michael Vanyo, superintendent; Joyce Teed, vice-president; (back, l to r) Philip Olsen; Anthony Covington; Gabriela Quintanilla, student member; Andrew Kavleski; Christine Schiff; Cindy Prince; David L. Burke; and Lorine Lamerand, business manager. Not pictured: Cindy L. Conklin

LHS Chosen for DEC “Green Chemistry” Program

Liberty High School was one of four schools recently chosen by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for a pilot program on using green chemistry in schools. The high school was also chosen to host a green chemistry workshop for Hudson Valley science teachers.

Green chemistry uses more ‘environmentally friendly’ reagents and solvents to reduce hazardous waste disposal and exposures to students and staff.

The pilot program – Green Chemistry in NYS Schools – is a continuation of a DEC initiative begun in 2005 to reduce the use of toxic chemicals in public schools. It was made possible through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

This is the new frontier in science, according to Deborah Knight, an environmental program specialist with the NYS DEC.

“It is critical for schools to begin teaching green chemistry to students at the high school level as the first step towards transforming how the next generation of chemists does



Going Green in Science Class: Hudson Valley teachers conduct a “green chemistry” extraction experiment using citrus and dry ice instead of chemicals.

business,” said Knight. “By teaching green chemistry, today’s teachers are poised to deliver new ideas in science

and technology that will enhance sustainable practices.”

In October, Liberty hosted 25 science teachers from 19 school districts, one university and 11 counties for a day-long workshop on green chemistry.

The workshop, presented by Beyond Benign, taught educators the 12 principles of green chemistry, gave them lesson plans to introduce green chemistry to students and allowed them to try hands-on laboratory activities.

“We are thrilled to be a part of this program,” said Michael Hazelnis, chair of the high school Science Department. “Green chemistry will not only better prepare students who plan on pursuing degrees in science-related fields, but it will undoubtedly be better for the environment.”

Liberty Welcomes Two New Faces to Fill Director Spots

This fall, Liberty Central School District welcomed two new staff members: Andy Buchsbaum as director of athletics and physical education, and Kathleen Bressler as assistant director of student services.



Andy Buchsbaum,
Director of Athletics and PE

Buchsbaum comes to Liberty via New Fairfield Public Schools, where he most recently served as an athletic coordinator at the high school and the K-12 health and physical education coordinator. Prior to that, he taught physical education and was the head football coach. He has earned numerous coaching awards and coached multiple sports at the varsity level.

“I want to be an energetic and positive leader, and I look forward to becoming a part of this community and to working with the staff and student-athletes to build on Liberty’s success,” said Buchsbaum.



Kathleen Bressler,
Asst. Director of Student Services

Bressler comes to Liberty from Virginia, where she most recently served as assistant principal at Grafton Middle School in York County. Prior to that, she served as the assessment and compliance coordinator at Tabb High School and as a special education teacher and department chair at York High School. She will earn her doctorate in general educational administration from the College of William and Mary later this year.

Bressler has local roots, being a 1996 graduate of Livingston Manor High School. Her father-in-law also taught in Liberty and retired just last year.

“I am excited to be back – it feels really good to be home in Sullivan County, and I am glad to be a part of Liberty,” she said.

LHS Graduates: Where are They Now?

The future is bright – and varied – for Liberty High School graduates. In the coming months, several of those graduates will be spotlighted in this new newsletter feature. If you are an LHS alumna/nus with a unique or inspiring story to share, send an e-mail to aruef@libertyk12.org.



Erin Slaver, Musician Class of 2006

After Graduation:

I attended SUNY Stony Brook University Honors College, where I received my bachelor's degree in music and graduated summa cum laude. I am now working on my master's degree in violin performance at the same university, where I was awarded a full-tuition scholarship.

World of Work:

I took a leave of absence this past year to pursue an artist career in Nashville, Tenn.

Proudest Moments:

I'll be going into the studio mid-October with Producer Keith Follse and Executive Producer Paul Kasofsky, who also hails from Liberty. Paul is my manager, and we are embarking on a fantastic journey together. I'll be recording some new country/pop music written by Keith and some very highly regarded songwriters.

Last year, I formed my own band in New York. We were performing at legendary clubs in Manhattan like the Bitter End and The National Underground. One of my proudest moments was my very first show and getting to see all of our hard work come together!

Life Lessons Learned at LHS:

Being part of a small school environment gave me self-confidence and a strong belief in my own abilities that I truly needed once I became part of a larger community.

As a musician (or anyone in the art disciplines), you often feel judged and pressured by the public eye, especially by your own colleagues. It's very easy to start losing confidence in yourself. Yet my experiences at Liberty gave me the strength to get through even the toughest moments of my undergraduate and graduate career. Even now, while living in a big city like Nashville, I can look back at my time in Liberty and feel the support of such a wonderful tight-knit community.



Erin Simpson, Auditor Class of 2004

After Graduation:

I earned bachelor's degrees in accounting and criminology at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. I am currently pursuing a master's degree in business administration at the University of Maryland – College Park.

World of Work:

I work for the U.S. Department of Energy in the Office of Inspector General. I am an auditor-in-charge and am responsible for planning and conducting audits and writing reports, which are published on our website.

Proudest Moments:

In college, I was responsible for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program that we ran to prepare tax returns for low-income people. I also belonged to a number of clubs and was elected to the boards of many of them.

At work, I have earned three promotions in the past three years to get to my current position. I have also received On-the-Spot Awards for my work on certain audit jobs.

Life Lessons Learned at LHS:

I think back to my years in Liberty and know that there are many teachers who encouraged me and let me know that I could accomplish anything I set my mind to. I remember being challenged as far back as elementary school by teachers who knew how to enrich their students. As a three-season athlete, it was important for me to learn to organize myself and be able to focus so that I could get everything done in the time I had. This has helped me through college and even today.

In college, I double majored and double minored as well as rowed crew for three out of the four years I was there. It was very important that I was able to focus on the task at hand and use good time management skills. Today I work full time and go to school part time, so again, it is very important to use my time wisely. Having instilled those values during high school has made all of my accomplishments since seem less daunting.

Grades K-6 Enjoy More Hands-on Science with New Program

Biodegradable foam peanuts can usually be found in shipping containers, but give them a whirl in some water, and you have a science lesson on discrepant events!

At least, that's what Terry Planica's fourth-graders learned during a recent hands-on experiment where they observed a discrepant event, or unanticipated result, when their foam peanuts dissolved in water. It was just one of many experiments they will attempt this year as part of a new science curriculum for Liberty grades K-6.

Science 21 is an inquiry-based program designed to help students meet the New York State learning standards for science, math and technology. Lessons often integrate elements of English language arts as well. At each grade level, students spend the school year working through lessons that fall under four instructional units: the scientific method, physical science, earth and space science, and life science. The program provides much more hands-on

learning than previously used science curriculum, according to program co-facilitator and seventh- and eighth-grade science teacher Kyle McGinn.

"It gets students more engaged in the topics. Actually seeing the science should make the learning easier," he said.

In Liberty, elementary and middle school teachers began fully embracing the program this fall. Their students will progress through the program as they age, with concepts and experiments building on each other and becoming more challenging at each grade level. For example, a kindergartner might begin by learning what it means to compare two different things. As a third-grader, that child might compare a butterfly's changes in appearance during its life cycle to the less-changing appearance of a human during its life cycle.

Planica facilitates the Science 21 program along with McGinn. Her favorite lab experiment so far, one on the density of water, required students to follow directions on their own. Those who followed the directions did the lab properly, but those who didn't had to figure out why the experiment wasn't working.

"They're so used to asking for help, that sometimes they don't see the value in making a mistake. I think they learned more by making mistakes than by getting it right," she said.



District Website, Budget Newsletter Earn Awards

Liberty Central School District received an Award of Excellence for its website and an Award of Honor for its 2011 budget newsletter in the 32nd Annual Communications Contest sponsored by the New York School Public Relations Association.

Communications professionals from around the country judged the awards. They will be presented at a luncheon during the 2011 convention of the New York State School Boards Association in Buffalo.

Wall of Fame Nominations due Jan. 13

Liberty Central School District will accept nominations for the Wall of Fame now through January 13, 2012.

The Wall of Fame was established to honor outstanding alumni, employees and community members who have made a lasting contribution to society, the district and the Liberty community.

Seven people were honored last year, including: Dr. Irvin Borish (class of 1930), James Burke (faculty), Alan Gerry (community member), Howard K. Schue (class

of 1959), Sister Patricia Ann Startup (class of 1965), Lawrence Stier (class of 1945), and Charles "Woody" Witherwax (faculty). Their accomplishments can now be found on plaques in the lobby of the Liberty High School David E. Panebaker Auditorium.

Nomination forms are available online at http://libertyk12.org/Wall_of_fame/WOF_home.cfm or by calling (845) 292-5400, x2055. Selected honorees will be notified in the spring and inducted in June.

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Writing Daily

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example, students are continuing to learn about writing through daily writing workshops. This helps to ingrain the process in students, according to English teacher and facilitator Joanne Smith.

"Oftentimes, students are reluctant to write. Giving them time to practice writing and to learn new strategies about the writing process allows them to be more confident in themselves as writers," she said.

Fifth-graders began the year focusing on personal narratives and learning how to choose topics to write about. This helps them become more independent writers and teaches them to move from summarizing to actual storytelling.



Lessons about reading and essay writing will also help prepare them for state assessments. Parents can further strengthen students' writing skills by encouraging them to write at home about their life experiences.

"One idea that permeates the program is there is always something to write about," said Smith.

Ribbon Cutting

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

variety of improvements, with perhaps the most visible being the new library/media center that was the site of the ribbon cutting ceremony. Its unique design makes it a "net zero building" with regard to energy usage, the only known such facility in the state.

Other renovations included a new covered walkway, foyer and main office at the high school. Locker rooms, bathrooms and six science classrooms were also renovated.

At the elementary school, improvements included the addition of eight new classrooms, a cafeteria, a kitchen and a drop-off loop at the front of the building; an expanded playground; façade preservation; renovated offices and bathrooms; and replacing windows and roofing.

Those finished spaces bring to a close what the superintendent has called "phase 1" of an ongoing facilities improvement plan. Last May, voters approved of the creation of a capital reserve fund, which allows the district to set aside excess revenues or unspent appropriations at the end of each school year to address facilities issues not included in the most recent project.

New Science Program

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Science 21 was developed and is annually updated by educators with the Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES. They provide participating school districts with instructional kits, curriculum manuals, instructional guides, assessment packets, vocabulary lists, professional development workshops, and more.

"We did a lot of research before we selected this program, and we are very happy so far with the results," said Planica. "It's good science for every student in every grade."

Celebrate the Holiday Season with Music at LHS

This winter, come celebrate the holiday season by enjoying a variety of student musical performances. Concerts are held in the Liberty High School David E. Panebaker Auditorium. All are free and open to the public.

Student musicians perform under the direction of music teachers Scott Glasser, Tim Hamblin, Dan McConnell, Emily Ford, and Gary Siegel.

NYSSMA ZONE 9 AREA ALL-STATE MUSIC FESTIVAL

Nov. 18-19
Suffern High School
49 Viola Rd., Suffern, NY
Six local students will perform.

TRI-M MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION CEREMONY, HIGH SCHOOL CONCERT PART I

Wednesday, Nov. 30 (snow date 12/5)
Performances by the Honors Chamber Orchestra, Honors Chorus and Honors Band

HIGH SCHOOL CONCERT PART II

Wednesday, Dec. 7 (snow date 12/12)
Performances by the Symphonic Band, Mixed Chorus, String Orchestra and Jazz Ensemble

MIDDLE SCHOOL CONCERT PART I

Thursday, Dec. 8 (snow date 12/12)
Performances by the 7/8 String Orchestra, 7/8 Grade Concert Choir, 7/8 Grade Band and the Middle School Jazz Ensemble

HIGH SCHOOL WINTER CONCERT ASSEMBLY PROGRAM

Friday, Dec. 9, time TBD

MIDDLE SCHOOL CONCERT PART II

Wednesday, Dec. 14 (snow date 12/15)
Performances by the MS Woodwind Ensemble, 5/6 Orchestra, 5/6 Chorus and 5/6 Band

MIDDLE SCHOOL WINTER CONCERT ASSEMBLY PROGRAM

Friday, Dec. 16, at 1 p.m.

New Check-in Process Increases Safety at ES



This fall, Liberty Elementary School instituted a new check-in process after the completion of capital project work that has helped improve school safety.

During the school day, all visitors to the elementary school can now enter only through the main entrance.

A greeter (pictured above) is stationed there in accordance with the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education Act. The greeter directs visitors to appropriate places, maintains a record of all visitors and helps prevent visitors from unsafe and/or disruptive wandering.

Digital Photography

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Constant participation was an essential element in preparing for the Emerging New Artists show. Students had to complete assignments over the summer, and that work paid off when Liberty took the top three spots for photography.

"I enjoy seeing students find their voice in their work and being able to celebrate it. I think the rigor and quality level of the work shows in their final projects. We don't settle; we strive," said Lambert.

The Bethel Woods Center for the Arts is displaying photographs by Cano, Hersh and Atkins in its Corridor Gallery in October.

LUNCH MENU-NOVEMBER

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	1 Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	2 Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	3 Chili Con Carne/Rice Tuna Salad Plate Cheese Pizza	4 Grilled Cheese Cheese Pizza
7 Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	8 Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	9 Baked Meatloaf Egg Salad Sandwich Cheese Pizza	10 Hot Dog/Roll Cheese Pizza	11 Veterans Day School Closed
14 Hamburger/Bun Cheese Pizza	15 Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	16 Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	17 Beef Taco Tuna Salad Plate Cheese Pizza	18 Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety
21 Hot Dog/Roll Cheese Pizza	22 Hot Turkey Sandwich Egg Salad Sandwich Cheese Pizza	23 School Closed	24 Thanksgiving Day School Closed	25 School Closed
28 Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	29 Hamburger/Bun Cheese Pizza	30 Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety		

LUNCH MENU-DECEMBER

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
			1 Chicken Chow Mein Tuna Salad Plate	2 Grilled Cheese Sandwich Variety
5 Beef Taco Tuna Salad Plate Cheese Pizza	6 Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	7 Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	8 Baked Meatloaf Egg Salad Sandwich Cheese Pizza	9 Mac & Cheese Tuna Salad Plate
12 Hamburger/Bun Cheese Pizza	13 Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	14 Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	15 Sloppy Joe/Bun Tuna Salad Plate	16 Grilled Cheese Sandwich Variety
19 Hot Dog/Roll Cheese Pizza	20 Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	21 Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	22 Grilled Cheese Sandwich Variety	23 Mac & Cheese Tuna Salad Plate
26 Winter Recess School Closed	27 Winter Recess School Closed	28 Winter Recess School Closed	29 Winter Recess School Closed	30 Winter Recess School Closed

*Note: Most daily menus also include a sandwich variety and a hero variety even if they aren't listed above.

Federal income guidelines for reduced price meals

Families may apply for free or reduced price meals at any time during the school year if their household incomes meet federal guidelines (see chart at right).

For more information, visit www.libertyk12.org/FoodService/foodservice.cfm.

**Your household includes everyone living with you, related or not.

REDUCED PRICE ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART 2011-12

*Household size	Income of no more than...	
	Annually	Weekly
2	\$27,214	\$524
3	34,281	660
4	41,348	796
5	48,415	932
For each additional family member, add...		
	\$7,067	\$136

LIBERTY

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
115 Buckley Street
Liberty, NY 12754

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Digital Photography Artists Earn Awards, College Credit

Liberty High School seniors won the top three photography awards at "The Next Generation: Showcasing Emerging New Artists" show in September. Those students – Esa Cano (first), Andrew Hersh (second) and Jenna Atkins (third) – are among several taking a new photography class that offers a chance to earn college credit.

The "Digital Photography I" class goes beyond the basics of digital photography. In it, students learn to work with digital cameras, download and set up digital photo files, finesse files in Photoshop, address resolution issues, print, mat and frame photos, and more.

The advanced class is ideal for students like Hersh, who feel "taking pictures is a way of life."

In addition to attending their regularly scheduled classes, students also meet one night a week to

use studio equipment and work on more digital photography techniques.

Atkins is willing to make that commitment because she wants to pursue a career in photography. "I hope to gain all the skills I can while I'm here," she said.

The class, led by teacher Kathy Lambert, allows students to earn three credits from Sullivan County Community College.

"This course requires that students stay on task, constantly participate, grow as artists, and demonstrate their willingness to go back and rework images until they are right," said Lambert.

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A Fine Showing: Seniors (front, l to r) Andrew Hersh, Nick Doolittle, Esa Cano and Jenna Atkins participated in a photography show at the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts.



Daily Dose of Writing Continues in Grade 5

Liberty fifth-graders are becoming more confident writers through a curriculum that focuses on the actual writing process as well as writing activities. By doing so, they are strengthening skills previously developed in elementary school.

The Lucy Calkins' Units of Study for Teaching Writing program was previously implemented in grades 3-4 as part of a scientific, research-based, balanced literacy initiative for all elementary students. As this year's fifth-graders moved up, so did the program. For

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