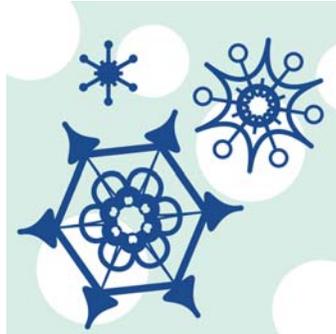


Waterbury Public Schools News Update

Vol. 12, Issue 3

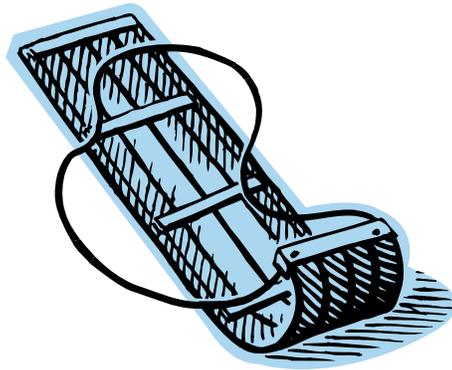
January, February, March 2011



Snow Is Good For Learning, Too - When Snow Strikes, Teachers Respond With Creative Lesson Plans

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I was thinking of doing a short lesson on how much snow weight is on the roof of a home. Yesterday I calculated that the 12" of snow I took off my home with a 3,000 sq. ft. roof weighed 38,988 lbs. A fully loaded 18 wheel tractor trailer truck can weigh between 30,000 to 50,000 lbs. Imagine having a 18 wheeler sitting on your roof!!!! If you really want some scary thoughts try 2 ft. or 3 ft. of snow.

James Castagna
Technology
Education,
Wilby High School

Jim Battistrada, the woodworking / construction teacher at Wilby, writes:
We are currently building old fashioned sleds and have gone into the study of toboggans. This has led us to explore the origins of toboggans, which, in turn, led us to an actual Eskimo site. That leads to all types of topics, one being actual Eskimo narratives on this subject. There are obvious measurement and math crossovers as well.

Partners With the Community

Woodrow Wilson School students had a special visit from Santa Claus this year. Santa brought presents for everyone at the school, courtesy of the school's business partner, NEJ, Inc.



Schools, Staff Participate in St. Baldrick's Foundation Fund-Raiser

North End is once again participating in the St Baldricks Foundation Fund Raiser. Staff will be shaving their heads to raise money for "kids with cancer". This year, John Rosa, the barber who was attacked while working in his barber shop on Hill Street has agreed to help out by shaving some heads.



About the St. Baldrick's Foundation

The St. Baldrick's Foundation is a volunteer-driven charity committed to funding the most promising research to find cures for childhood cancers and give survivors long and healthy lives. The Foundation funds more in childhood cancer research grants than any organization except the U.S. government. St. Baldrick's funds are granted to some of the most brilliant childhood cancer research experts in the world and to younger professionals who will be the experts of tomorrow. Funds awarded also enable hundreds of local institutions to participate in national pediatric cancer clinical trials, a child's best hope for a cure. Since the Foundation's first grants as an independent charity in 2005, St. Baldrick's has funded more than \$76 million in childhood cancer research. For more information about the St. Baldrick's Foundation please call 1.888.899.BALD or visit www.StBaldricks.org.

Staff News, Awards and Achievements

Michael LoRusso, Principal of North End Middle School, received the 2011 CASL Administrator's Award this year at the annual CASL Festival held April 27. The Administrator's Award honors an administrator "who provides necessary support for improving media services through encouragement and adequate funding for program maintenance and improvement."



Gina Calabrese has been chosen this year's Region 1 Principal of the Year by the Magnet Schools of America. She was honored at a Connecticut Association of Interdistrict Magnet Schools meeting recently and will be honored again nationally when the MSA conference is held later this year. This is not the first time Rotella has received national recognition. Teacher Judith Dooling has been recognized as a Region 1 Teacher of the Year and the school itself was named a national award winner a few years ago. We have always known Gina was an outstanding principal and it is great to see her honored in this fashion.

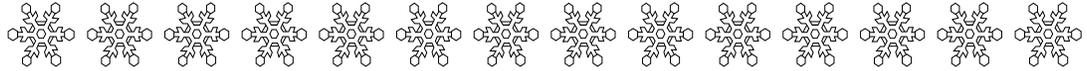
According to Lisa Ariola-Simoes, SVP at State Street School, Waterbury Youth Services has nominated the State Street School's Social Work team to receive the Dr. Larry Shea Child Abuse & Prevention Award at the Ponte Club on Wednesday March 30th.

Several teachers applied for the Target Field Trip grants this year. One teacher, Lenore Gagain, from Generali School, has been awarded \$700 for her proposed class trip to the Festival of Cultures.

The district has also received a \$1500 competitive grant from the Linford and Mildred White Charitable Fund for PBIS end-of-year rewards activities in our schools.



Snow Inspirations, Continued



AMY Petrucci - I'm a fifth grade teacher at Regan, and have a snow-related Social Studies unit, which (naturally) incorporates Language Arts and Math.

"Let It Snow" Unit Theme (Local, U.S., and World History/Geography/ Economics) Designed to Make New England Students Hale, Hearty and Wise

1. There's No Belt Like The Snowbelt - Geography and History Blizzards and N'oreasters to Remember Timeline activity based on facts and pictorial history with captions

2. Snowstorm Brainstorm -- Social Studies and Logic Who Stays Home? (Essential and Non-essential categories), Radio + Television, School District Phone + Website

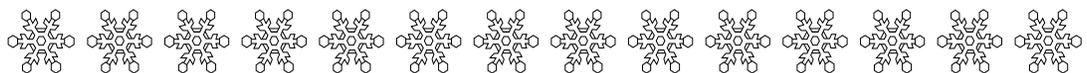
3. Farmer's Almanac -- Math and Reading for Information Predicting the Weather, Charting Precipitation, Reporting the Weather in "Live" Broadcast

4. New England Sleigh Ride
Connecticut Composer Leroy Anderson
Biography of Anderson, listening to music and commenting on pattern and connections made.

5. Stick Around!
Maine's Natural Barometer
Identify terms associated with winter weather, cloud formations and precipitation Compare old methods of prediction against modern technological advances (ie: Doppler radar).

6. Winter Olympics: Promoting Peace and Tolerance Through Sport 2010 Canada -- which country hosts next? Research (compare + contrast) ie: Luge/ Bobsleigh/Skeleton

7. White Out, Write Out: Letters to Classmates Research the U.S. Postal Service and Mail Deliverer's Creed Format "Friendly Letter" and proofread for grammar Write descriptive letter to classmate, proper addressing of correspondence envelope What is Philately? USPS website research



What's the Matter with my Snow? Activity to determine density of snow relate to whether good packing snow for a snowball fight (between .4 g/ml and .6 g/ml) or to wet/slushy or to dry/ fluffy.

Also tie in to Glacial Pressure-- similar to way snowball forms when pressed between a person's hand--heavily compacted layer of ice on bottom-- students can relate to reason why so much damage to roofs, streets and sidewalks after impact of accumulation of snow from these wintry storms

Betsy Tymosko WAMS
7th Grade Science



Terri Miller - We are discussing solids, liquids, and gases in science third grade. Good demo to show students how matter could change (solid snowball into a liquid water) Also, we can tie in evaporation into the lesson.

M.M. Generali School

Here at Gilmartin ESH Afterschool Program, we are measuring snow piles & converting feet to inches. This is helping us get prepared for the CMT! ...but in a fun way!
Kristine Kijak

Kennedy High School Journalists Help Plan for Triathlon



Kennedy journalists sophomore Naija Ortiz, senior Elena Ramos and senior Domenic Roy brainstorm and plan for the national Rev3 triathlon returning to Connecticut for two races in June. Roy served as 2010 Volunteer Captain with 26 Kennedy students. The activity-filled weekend at Quassy Park in Middlebury includes various entertainment and athletic events plus these triathlons have been voted "Best Family Friendly Race" by Triathlete magazine and "Best Triathlon" by Travlete web press.

With more than \$150,000 in prize money and a jam-packed weekend featuring world-class athletes, the national Rev3 triathlon returns to Quassy Park in Middlebury June 4-5, 2011.

Local residents, volunteer organizations and school groups like Kennedy High School's Eagle Flyer journalists will participate, and Greater Waterbury community groups are encouraged to get involved now, according to Director LJ White.

Rev3 will be hosting two races at Quassy: an ORev distance triathlon Saturday,

June 4 and a world-class HalfRev triathlon Sunday, June 5. Sunday's race will feature Pro-Triathletes from all over the world competing for \$150,000 in prize money and an amateur field expected to have more than 800 athletes, White said.

In addition to enjoying Quassy rides and activities, vendors and groups such as local chamber of commerce representatives will highlight products or services including area restaurants, sporting goods, and health or wellness information.

"We are proud to announce that these triathlons have been voted "Best Family

Friendly Race" by Triathlete magazine and "Best Triathlon" by Travlete web press. We would love to have you come out, show your spirit and enjoy the fun!" White said.

Kennedy senior Domenic Roy, an Eagle Flyer staff writer, was one of 26 journalism students who manned two stations in Middlebury providing water, fruit and other refreshments to the athletes for the June 6, 2010 race. He and his classmates designed six gigantic banners they placed along roadways encouraging the bikers and runners.

Brief Stories From Around the District -



Kennedy and Barnard:
Students belonging to the Young Educators Society at Kennedy High School visited students at Barnard School. Brittany Jackson is president of the Young Educators Society, Kennedy High School.



Students in Chase School's Bilingual Education classes learned about the properties of water during a special lesson that included hands-on science activities.

More Brief Notes

The Waterbury Republican American recently named two Crosby seniors to their list of Volleyball Academic All Stars. The two are Xhensila Spahiu, who is also Key Club Vice President, and Alba Hoxha, who is currently ranked second in the senior class.

Two Crosby High School Future Business Leaders of America students won at the FBLA State Competition on March 28th. Kaitlyn Sprague won third place for personal finance and Alieha Anderson won third place for spreadsheet applications. The FBLA advisor at the school is Melissa (Marcoux) Sieffert, Business Teacher. In addition to being the FBLA advisor at Crosby, she is also President of the Connecticut Business Educators Association (CBEA).

Thirteen Waterbury students will be participating in a program called Go4Aerospace, beginning with a visit to Central Connecticut State University's Engineering Department on March 4. In the morning the students participated in engineering based activities and problem solving. The afternoon session included trips to local Connecticut engineering firms. This summer the students will have a chance to participate in a summer institute. The students will participate in additional sessions on April 8, May 13 and June 3.

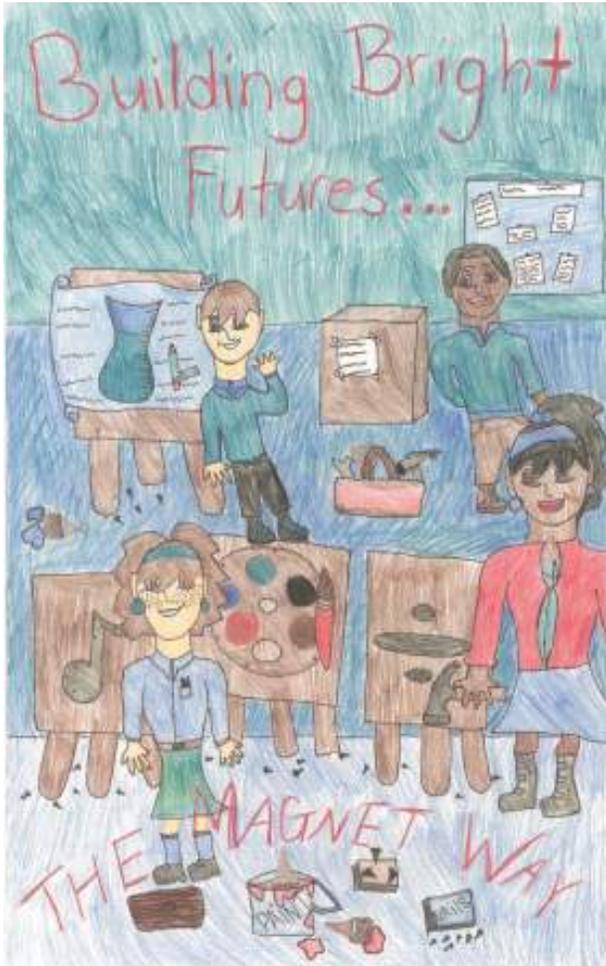
Waterbury Public Schools hosted a forum on school governance councils at Crosby High School. This forum was open to all parents from throughout the district as well as members of the community who were interested in learning more about this new state requirement. Fifteen of our schools are state-mandated to establish school governance councils by November 1. They are: Barnard, Bucks Hill, Carrington, Chase, Driggs, Sprague, Walsh, Washington, Woodrow Wilson, Wallace, West Side, North End, Crosby, Kennedy and Wilby. The forum will also give information on school action teams, which are similar in concept but voluntary in nature. The district is planning to establish school action teams in 13 of its schools this year, with more to follow next year. The 13 action teams established this year may help schools with the school governance election process next year as well as perform school welcoming environment "walk-through"s this year.

Kennedy High School senior Domenic Roy won the 2010- 2011 Connecticut Daily Newspaper Association's annual High School Journalism Contest for Feature Photography, only one of seven students in the state to be honored. The CDNA Board received a record number of entries exhibiting outstanding talent in journalism. Domenic, along with his parents and teacher, received his award at a luncheon ceremony at The Hartford Courant featuring UConn's president and the CEO of the Courant/Fox 61 News, according to Rachel Bruno from the Connecticut Daily Newspaper Association. This makes 41 awards for the Kennedy Eagle Flyer newspaper staff.

Two North End Middle School students have been named recipients of PAL scholarships that will enable them to attend a Taft School summer program this year. The two are Haranjeet Singh and Arayzon Brathwaite, both age 12.

Twenty teams from 17 schools competed at a Unified Basketball Tournament at Wilby in March. Unified teams includes special needs students and student helpers. In addition to teams from Wilby and Kennedy, there will also be teams from PAL, Danbury, Woodland Regional, and Bristol.

More Brief Notes



Autumn McDonald, a fifth grader at Rotella, won the national poster contest from the Magnet Schools of America this year.

UPDATE ON NEW SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PROCESS: Parents and community members are invited to participate in a survey available on the district web site seeking input on the search for a new superintendent.

the federal Department of Agriculture proposed some major changes in school lunch menus, the first such change in 15 years. The changes would apply to meals subsidized by the federal government and would require a reduction in sodium, an increased use of whole grains and a limitation of just one cup of starchy vegetables per week. It would also require schools to serve low fat milk. It is anticipated that similar new guidelines will be developed for so-called "a la carte" menu items as well. This is still a proposal and must make its way through the approval process before being adopted.

Crosby and Holy Cross once again faced off last week in the NVL boys basketball championship game. Crosby won its eighth straight NVL title, beating Holy Cross 77 to 61. Crosby had won its semi-final against Wilby 78 to 72, and Holy Cross took its semi-final against Watertown, 69 to 50.

Crosby High School to Observe Rare Disease Day

Waterbury, CT, February 28-----Crosby High School will observe Rare Disease Day on February 28, along with the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) and a coalition of more than 300 patient organizations, medical societies, government agencies and companies representing the rare disease community. The purpose is to focus attention on rare diseases as a public health concern.

“People with rare diseases remain a medically underserved population around the world,” said Peter L. Saltonstall, president and CEO of NORD. “Studies have shown that it typically takes many years to get an accurate diagnosis for a rare disease. Also, little or no research is being done on many of these diseases, and more than 15 million Americans have rare diseases for which there is no treatment.”

Rare Disease Day was launched by the European Rare Disease Organization, EURORDIS, in 2008 and now is spreading around the world. NORD is the sponsor in the U.S., and Crosby High School has joined this effort organized by NORD to raise awareness of the needs of patients and families.

In the U.S., a disease is considered rare if it affects fewer than 200,000 Americans. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), there are nearly 7,000 such diseases affecting nearly 30 million Americans. That’s almost one in ten people.

Patients and their families often feel isolated and forgotten. However, there are certain problems and challenges associ-

ated with having a rare disease that patients have in common, and Rare Disease Day is intended to focus attention on those needs.

Rare Disease Day activities in the U.S. will include a nationwide network of online videos, patient stories and blogs; newspaper, radio, and television reports; state and municipal proclamations; a Rare Disease Hall of Fame for researchers; and other activities designed to raise awareness of what it means to have a rare disease.

Rare Disease Day 2011 also will highlight the need for more medical research and the unique partnership that exists between rare disease patients and researchers. Government entities that have signed on with NORD as “Rare Disease Day Partners” to help promote awareness of the day include the NIH Office of Rare Diseases Research, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Office of Orphan Products Development, and Social Security Administration.

“More than half of the people who have rare diseases are children,” Saltonstall said. “Parents often have difficulty finding a medical expert for their child or accessing other needed services. Also, many rare diseases have no approved treatment, and insurance may not cover treatments that aren’t approved.”

In 1983, the *Orphan Drug Act* was passed by Congress to create financial incentives for companies to develop treatments for rare diseases. Since then, more than 340 “orphan” drugs and biologics have been approved by FDA. While FDA

estimates that from 11 to 14 million Americans benefit from these products, that still leaves more than 15 million Americans with diseases for which there is no approved treatment.

NORD was established in 1983 by patient leaders who helped get the *Orphan Drug Act* passed. It provides advocacy on behalf of the rare disease community; research grants and fellowships; educational services; and patient assistance programs.

submitted by:

Madeline Nolan
Health Teacher
Crosby High School

Crosby High School Participates -----

Health Teacher Madeline Nolan, who spearheaded the Crosby High School effort, explained the school is hoping to promote awareness of rare diseases. As students entered the school that day, they were randomly assigned to wear a wristband that denoted they were an individual having a rare disease, family member of a person with a rare disease or friend of someone with a rare disease. Students were then able to see how rare diseases can affect the general population.

Information on rare diseases was available throughout the day.



Rare Disease Day News

What is a rare disease?

In the United States, a disease is considered rare if it is believed to affect fewer than 200,000 Americans. Some other countries and the European Union have similar but slightly different definitions.

How many people have rare diseases?

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), there are almost 7,000 rare diseases affecting nearly 30 million Americans.

What are some examples of rare diseases?

There are many types of rare diseases, including autoimmune, cardiovascular, chromosomal, dermatologic, infectious, endocrine, gastroenterologic, metabolic, neurologic, ophthalmologic, pulmonary, renal, and skeletal diseases. Some, such as hemophilia and Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS), have names that are familiar to the public. Others bear the names of the physicians who first identified them (Menkes disease, for instance) or even the first patient or the first hospital where they were discovered (Floating Harbor syndrome). The most complete listing of rare diseases in the U.S. is on the website of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Rare Diseases Research (ORDR) at <http://rarediseases.info.nih.gov/>.

Who is affected by rare diseases?

Nearly one in 10 Americans has a rare disease. Many of these diseases are genetic and present at birth (although some genetic diseases may not become apparent until much later in life). More than half of the people known to be affected by rare diseases at this time are children. One of NORD's continuing themes is that everyone knows someone affected by a rare disease. With so many different types of diseases, even though each one is rare, the impact on the American population as a whole is significant. For that reason, rare diseases are an important public health concern.

How many rare diseases have treatments?

Many rare diseases still have no approved treatment. And many are not even being studied by medical researchers, at this time. Often, people with rare diseases are treated "off-label" (with treatments that are not approved by FDA for their specific disease). Increasingly, patients are experiencing reimbursement problems with insurance (including Medicare and Medicaid) for off-label treatments.

What are some of the problems experienced by people who have rare diseases?

- Difficulty in obtaining an accurate diagnosis
- Limited treatment options
- Little or no research being done on the disease
- Difficulty finding physicians or treatment centers with experience in treating a particular rare disease
- Treatments that are generally more expensive than those for common diseases
- Reimbursement issues related to private insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid
- Difficulty accessing medical, social, or financial services or assistance because those making the decisions are not familiar with the disease

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As Park Builds New Marquee Attraction

Roller Coaster Model Contest For Schools Returns To Quassy For Third Year

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. – There has been a work in progress as Quassy Amusement Park's new "Wooden Warrior" roller coaster has been constructed high above the lakeside property – virtually board-by-board - over the past seven months.

Now, local and area students will have an opportunity to create their own classic rides as the park presents its Third Annual Roller Coaster Model Contest for regional schools on Sunday, June 12. Guidelines for the contest have been provided by the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT).

Team categories for the event are: Grades 1-4, Grades 5-8 and Grades 9-12. There is no fee to participate, but schools must pre-register by e-mailing or mailing the entry/scoring forms of competing teams (maximum of four teams per school) to ron@quassy.com by May 15. Entry/scoring forms may be downloaded from the Press Room page at www.quassy.com.

Teachers are encouraged to view the complete rules and judging criteria on the Web site page.

"The coaster model contest has been a great educational event for students over the past few years," noted Eric Anderson, a Quassy owner. "With all of the excitement circulating throughout the communities about our new wooden coaster, we're extremely enthused about this year's model contest."

Build A Working Model

Working roller coaster models may be constructed of wood, wire, string, twine, doweling, toothpicks, cardboard, construction paper, glue, tape or other low-cost items.

Commercially available roller coaster kits are discouraged, although ideas obtained while building them might profitably be incorporated in the final design.

Roller coasters are called "gravity rides" for a good reason: once the coaster has been dragged to the top of the first hill and released, it is the force of gravity that keeps the coaster going all the way back to the station platform at the end of the ride.

As the coaster goes through its twists, turns, rolls, and loops, it gains and loses its initial potential energy (supplied by dragging it up the first hill).

Energy changes from potential into kinetic energy and back into potential energy. Since some of this initial energy is lost due to friction, the roller coaster can never rise as high as the first hill.

Let Gravity Do The Work

The roller coasters students will design will also be "gravity rides". In the "Spirit of the Competition," the key ingredients are creativity and application of science principles.

Doing a great job is encouraged over spending lots of money to complete the project.

Judging

Roller coasters will judged based on three categories: (1) Technical Merit; (2) Theme and Creativity; (3) Most exciting to ride.

First and Second Place Prizes will be awarded in the following categories: (1) Grades 1-4; (2) Grades 5-8; (3) Grades 9-12.

Quassy's "Wooden Warrior" roller coaster will be the park's marquee attraction when it opens this spring. The ride features more than 1,000 feet of diving, twisting track along a unique layout. features more than two-dozen rides and attractions, beach, waterpark, restaurant, redemption arcade, entertainment and special events.

For more about the facility visit www.quassy.com



Quassy Amusement Park's new "Wooden Warrior" roller coaster is shown in this recent photo as the framework for the new ride has been completed. Construction continues on the track and other elements of the ride in preparation for its spring opening. (Quassy photo)