

Schools

Students in the News

Baver Attends St. Lawrence

St. Lawrence University welcomes Sarah E. Baver of Mont Vernon as a member of the class of 2012. Each freshman will participate in St. Lawrence University's innovative First-Year Program, an introduction to the liberal arts curriculum taught in residence halls by faculty teams. Baver graduated from Souhegan High School in Amherst.



Sarah E. Baver

Local Cadet Completes Basic Training

WEST POINT, N.Y. – Cadet Jonathan Michael Palmeri, son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Palmeri of Amherst completed Cadet Basic Training at the U.S. Military Academy. Palmeri entered West Point on June 30, 2008 and recently completed seven weeks of CBT. Also referred to as "Beast Barracks," CBT is one of the most challenging events a cadet will encounter over the course of their four years at the academy.

The initial military training program provides cadets with basic skills to instill discipline, pride, cohesion, confidence and a high sense of duty to prepare them for entry into the Corps of Cadets. Areas of summer instruction included first aid, mountaineering, hand grenades, rifle marksmanship and nuclear, biological, and chemical training.

Palmeri began classes Aug. 21. The West Point curriculum offers 45 majors balancing physical sciences and engineering with humanities and social sciences leading to a Bachelor of Science degree.

Palmeri graduated from Saint Stephens Episcopal School in Austin, TX. He plans to graduate from West Point in 2012 and be commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

The mission of the U.S. Military Academy is to educate, train, and

inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the United States Army.

Wentworth Institute of Technology Announces Dean's List Recipients

Wentworth Institute of Technology today announced the names of students who have earned Dean's List recognition for the Summer 2008 semester. Included on this list was Amherst student, Oliver Huntley.

Morrison Graduates from Colby-Sawyer College

Kerri A. Morrison, daughter of Colleen A. Morrison and Bruce R. Morrison, both of Amherst, graduated on May 10th from Colby-Sawyer College in New London. She received her bachelor of science degree in psychology and will be continuing on with her masters degree in the spring. She is a graduate of Sohegan High School.

At Colby-Sawyer she performed in theatre productions and pursued her love of photography exhibiting in school arts festivals. She is currently a pet photographer.

Academic Honor For Local Resident

Baltimore, Md. - Meaghan Malloy of Amherst was named to the Dean's list for the spring 2008 semester of The Johns Hopkins University. To be selected for this honor, a student must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

Meaghan Malloy is the daughter of William and Jacquelyn Malloy and attended Souhegan High School. Meaghan, who is majoring in international studies, will graduate in May 2010.

From the Office of The Superintendent of Schools SAU 39

SAU 39 Cost Efficiencies For Today And Tomorrow

The news of the day centers on the financial climate of our state and nation. It is no wonder, then that as SAU39 prepares its budget for next year, that we look closely at spending this year, and prepare cautiously for next.

Fuel oil costs already have caused us to examine our current budget. Last year the cost of oil was \$2.19 per gallon; this year we locked into a rate of \$3.59 per gallon. Fortunately, the Amherst Schools will see substantial savings in fuel consumption due to renovations to their buildings. Souhegan's energy-efficiency initiatives have continued to see declining rates of fuel oil costs and Mont Vernon Village School is putting efficiencies in place. With these efforts we hope that energy costs will not consume educational costs.

Spikes in the cost of energy and changes in the economy cause us to examine the advantages of the Amherst, Mont Vernon and Souhegan Districts belonging to a single School Administrative Unit (SAU 39). Obviously, the administrative costs of running three separate school districts would be much greater than the costs of sharing them through a single SAU. Instead of three superintendents, we have one; instead of three central office buildings, we have one—the Brick School. There are many other cost efficiencies that a combine SAU provides and that our particular SAU39 provides. We'll be presenting some of these at each SAU 39 Board meeting this fall.

At our last meeting, Director of Special Education, Renea Sparks, talked about the cost savings she realizes by administering each district's large federal grants centrally. Special education vendors give an SAU lower rates when they are assured of contracts across each district. Also, training of special education staff is more efficient in terms of time and consultant dollars used when people come together from each district.

Renea described how we work to share transportation costs with other SAU's for daily out-of-district students and how expensive specialized equipment even is shared among districts. These past several years, we also have computerized the individualized education plans (IEPS's) and streamlined the SAU budget system resulting in better tracking of special education costs.

These and other efficiencies are always part of the decision-making at SAU 39. As we begin to develop our 2009-2010 budget with our School Boards, look for a continuation and refinement of our practices. And please feel free to let Board members or myself know of ideas you may have to make this year and next go well.

Mary Athey Jennings, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools, SAU 39



Free Child Check – October 25

The school districts of Amherst, Brookline, Milford, and Mont Vernon offer FREE Child Checks for children ages 3 to 5 years old. If you suspect you child may not be developing skills at age appropriate times, you may wish to have him/her screened at the Child Check. Specialists screen children's overall

development including speech/language, motor, vision, and hearing. Results are shared with parents at the time of the Child Check. APPOINTMENTS ARE REQUIRED. To schedule an appointment, please call Jane at 886-8500, Ext. 317. Screenings are also available for children under age 3.

The College Scramble

BY JUDITH H. ORME, MSW, LICSW



The pressure is on... making lists, scheduling visits, appointments with guidance counselors. The scramble for college admission creates significant pressure for high school seniors and their families. These adolescents want to make the right choice while they have considerable responsibilities to juggle: the ongoing work of their high school education, daily assignments, the pressure of maintaining or raising their GPA, making college decisions, while participating in as many extra-curricular activities as possible. The confluence of all these tasks is combined with high expectations from the adults in their lives. This stage can be quite stressful.

Questions/comments I've recently heard from parents are: "She isn't doing enough for college," or "How do I motivate him to bring up his grades?" or "How do we know which school is the right fit?"...and so on. With this sense of urgency, we may lose sight of some important factors: maintaining connection, unconditional support, effective communication, family discussions, and empathy for the stress and confusion our student is experiencing. This process is indeed overwhelming, triggering daunting responsibilities with which to cope. If the trail has not yet been blazed (with the "firstborn"), we face this with little knowledge or skills, coupled with considerable uncertainty.

Having personally navigated through this twice, I can attest to how overwhelming the process can be. After my oldest child had successfully entered college, I believed I was a "pro" and would skillfully maneuver through the second round. However, I believe the second time was equally as stressful. Each child is different, with distinct needs, perspectives, and strengths. I learned there is no template to follow (other than the basic structure), as approaching the next stage is unique to each student, considering learning styles/challenges, temperament, gender, level of maturity, and individual interests.

We do our student a great disservice if we fail to explore his view of the best path. He may not be ready for the traditional college track. We hold the view that high school seniors will inevitably go to college the following year, yet this is not always the best choice. A technical school, job training, or a gap year may be indicated. At a time when expectations and stress are high, providing stability for our students with the following is important:

- Be supportive and non-judgmental
- Listen to what your student wants for his future. Guide/consult without pushing your own agenda
- Have frequent, democratic discussions, exploring options and brainstorming what might work best
- Connect your student to local resources to help make the best decisions
- Collaborate closely with school guidance to insure optimal support for your student
- Talk to your student with understanding and respect, acknowledging how challenging this period of his life is: "This is such an overwhelming time for you. There is a great deal of pressure juggling your school work with everything's that's required in deciding your future course. How can I help you?"
- Partner with her in whatever way is most supportive. Rather than "managing" your student, take your cues from her. Remember, at this stage, you are her consultant.

When we intervene, suggesting a lack of confidence in our student's capabilities, we not only disrespect her needs, we are charting her course. Our measure of success is different from our student's; the best course is determined by careful exploration through his lens. As the prophet Kahlil Gibran so aptly wrote:

"Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of life's longing for itself. They come through you but not from you, And though they are with you yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts, For they have their own thoughts....You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth. The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that his arrows may go swift and far. Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness; For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable."

Judith Orme has a private practice in Amherst, KIDS & FAMILIES FIRST, with 26 years experience working with children, couples, and families. She is a psychotherapist, parent educator, child development specialist, coach/consultant. She facilitates educational and support groups, and provides a broad range of specialized divorce services.

Aa a NH-CERTIFIED mediator, Comprehensive Mediation Services provides a child-centered approach to facilitating divorce decisions, crafting custom-tailored parenting plans. Judith can be reached at 672-0179.

The Derryfield School:

How Far Would Your Mousetrap Car Go?

BY KATRINA HOLMAN



MANCHESTER – A recent assignment in the physics classes at The Derryfield School was to create a car powered by an old-fashioned mousetrap (rat traps not allowed!) that would travel at least 5m (about 15.9 ft).

For junior Matthew Porat of Amherst, this was a fun assignment. He came up with a speedy, elegant design. He finely tuned his creation with a drill press, belt sander, and rotating saw and used nice little wheels from a hobby store. His objective was to have the car accelerate quickly and maintain the final velocity across the finish line by getting rid of as many outside forces as possible.

Another student used a 16x3" lightweight bit of scrap wood, 3 CDs for wheels, balloon around the edges as tires, a 6" thin rod, nylon nuts, K'nex pieces, some string, a wire coat hanger – and a mousetrap with a spring. All put together by hand with no special tools. It wasn't elegant in design nor construction, and not built for speed, but it did successfully achieve the desired distance.

The students were allowed to consult the internet for design ideas and to work collaboratively, but had to build their car from scratch. If the car traveled the required 5m, they received an automatic A-, with additional points possible for being one of the fastest. How would you have designed and built a mousetrap car?

At The Derryfield School, Matthew Porat tests his mousetrap-driven car in Physics class. His unusual attire is for Grandparents' Day, when special guests are invited to sit in on the classes of their favorite students.

PHOTO BY ANNE BRANCH, THE DERRYFIELD SCHOOL



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Souhegan High Film Seminar presents:

Classic Film Series

(All films begin at 7:30pm Admission Free)

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| October-- Friday, 10/24 | King Kong |
| November-- Friday, 11/14 | High Noon |
| December-- Friday, 12/19 | It's a Wonderful Life |
| January-- Friday, 1/23 | Rear Window |
| February-- Friday, 2/6 | The Deer Hunter |
| March-- Friday, 3/13 | The Sound of Music |
| April-- Friday, 4/10 | Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid |
| May-- Friday, 5/29 | Raging Bull |