

Schools

SHS FIRST Robotics Team Kick-offs New Season

AMHERST - Souhegan High School's FIRST robotics team, Team #138, has begun preparations for the 2015 competition season learning robotic fundamentals, experimenting with new control technology, and fundraising to help defray program costs. The team has already competed at the pre-season River Rage competition held at Goffstown High School on October 25th where they qualified 10th in a 34 team field.

The Souhegan High School robotics team's major fund raiser is the Eleventh Annual Comedy Night at Souhegan High School on Saturday, January 24th. As part of this fund raiser, the team conducts a Silent Auction with items donated by generous local area businesses and individuals. Please consider making a product or gift certificate donation for the silent auction in January to support the robotics team. Silent auction donations can be coordinated by contacting the robotics team at roboticsteam138@gmail.com. Mark your calendars for a family night of great fun!

Founded by entrepreneur and inventor Dean Kamen in 1989 to inspire students to pursue careers in engineering and the sciences, the FIRST robotics program uses the excitement of a sporting competition to expose students to engineering, mathematics, and science. "During our season, students are exposed to the engineering process



solving a complex problem saddled with many competing cost and time constraints," stated Brian Walters, Team #138 program director. "They get first-hand experience exercising life skills like working as a team toward a common goal, decomposing a complex task into manageable activities, overcoming adversity, and practicing time management skills."

The 2015 FIRST Robotics Competition challenge will be revealed on January 3rd. Using a FIRST provided kit of parts, students and mentors collaborate to design and build 120 lb. robot in six short

weeks. The Souhegan High School robotics team is scheduled to compete in the Granite State District on February 26-28 in Nashua and in the UNH District on March 20-22 in Durham. The team hopes to qualify for the New England Championship on April 8-11 in Worcester.

The Souhegan High School robotics team has a proud history of designing and building very competitive robots. Last year, Team #138 won the Granite State District in Nashua. Team #138 is supported by a team of professional engi-

neers and generous support from local sponsors including Monarch Instrument, Souhegan District School System, Rockwell Automation, BAE Systems, SvenGrafik, County Stores, BB Molding Company, John Albert Welding Services, RAPID Sheet Metal and Machining, Datron, and J. R. Poirier Tool and Machine Company.

For more information on Team #138 and the FIRST Robotics Competition, please visit the team's website at www.robotics138.org.

Souhegan's Chef Works Magic Amidst Tight Guidelines and Budgets

By SALLY VARANKAS

What possessed Chef Mark Newton, in his second year at Souhegan High School, to leave behind 20 years of working in notable area restaurants, including Elisha's, Pasta Loft and Common Man, to tempt the finicky palates of nearly 800 teenagers each school day? And this year, Mark faces the additional challenge of developing savory choices within the new New Hampshire state and federal guidelines that promote healthy eating. "Working as a chef in restaurant can be stressful – the schedule of long hours including weekends and holidays, the physical demands of being on your feet all the time, the high turnover rate of staff – I knew it was time for a break," noted Mark. He wasn't looking to work in a school, but a family member alerted him to the opening at Souhegan, and after some investigation, he felt it was a good fit. He has no regrets.

Mark has worked in food since his first job at the Milford Meat Shop as a teenager. As a freshman at Keene State, Mark had not chosen a career path. He decided to transfer to New Hampshire College, now SNHU, to study accounting on his father's advice, but soon followed his own interests and earned a degree in culinary arts.

A typical day for Chef Mark at Souhegan starts at 5:30 am. Another kitchen staff member joins him at 6:45 am and the rest arrive between 8:00 and 9:00 am. Breakfast (breakfast sandwiches, muffins, bagels, fresh fruit etc.) for staff and students is available beginning at

7:00 am. Lunch is served beginning at 10:50 am. The four grades arrive at 30 minute intervals with the food line closing at 12:43pm. An average of 400 students take school lunch each day. His day at SHS usually ends shortly after 2pm. The majority of Chef Mark's time is spent on food preparation, although he also creates menus, orders food and supplies, accepts deliveries, and supervises staff, all from a tiny office wedged in at the back of the kitchen and in front of the delivery and storage areas. He found the kitchen to be well-equipped and enjoys both the autonomy and direction given him by his supervisor, Danielle Collins, SAU#39 School Nutrition Director.

State and federal guidelines are quite specific about food content (salt, sugar, etc.) and calorie totals. Cost limits his options as well. Chef Mark still gets to exercise his creativity. He likes working with entrees, bringing "real" chicken and seafood, as well as fresh vegetables like green beans and broccoli to the serving line. Preparation is key as well – broiling, baking and steaming replace frying. The salad bar at Souhegan boasts many tasty and unique items that vary regularly. From broccoli salad to Asian slaw to roasted vegetable, many staff look forward to the staff's creations. Because baking is not his specialty, he finds it most frustrating to work with desserts – whole grains are recommended, but, seemingly at cross purposes, add calories to items previously made with refined flour. Therefore, he often uses pre-packaged dessert items that



Chef Mark Newton

meet both the nutrition and calorie requirements but are in disappointingly small serving sizes. Fresh fruit is a more common option for dessert. The salad bar gives him the opportunity to create, with his staff, new combinations of vegetables and nutritious soups nearly every week. What entrée brings the most students to the lunch line? "Tuscan Bread (garlic bread with marinara sauce)," reported Chef Mark, shaking his head. Tuscan Bread was introduced to the Souhegan menu long ago and remains the favorite of students.

The food program at Souhegan is self-supporting, meaning it must collect all the revenue through the sale of lunches to cover expenses. School lunches cost \$3.25 – only \$1 goes to the actual cost of the food, all other income covers overhead expenses. And in his first year, Chef Mark started with a \$9000 deficit due to the breakdown of compressors for the walk-in freezer and refrigerator during the previous sum-

mer's roof repair work. However, he managed to break even by the end of that school year. Chef Mark is also building a snack program for advisories and provides occasional take-out dinners for staff, projects that generate alternate sources of revenue, are self-funded and help offset costs.

Chef Mark's favorite part of the job is working with his staff: Monica Barthel, Brenda Boucher, Laura Daniels, Coral Hazen, Maureen Hicks, Nicole Jean and Bernadette Wickham. Most have worked at Souhegan for years and all create the positive atmosphere in kitchen and cafeteria that greets hungry staff and students.

Here is a recipe from Mark's files that he has served in the SHS cafeteria, proven to warm up a winter's day. Here it is portioned for a small gathering- multiply by 40 and invite Souhegan over to lunch!

Curried Pumpkin and Apple Bisque (serves 8 to 10)

1 stick margarine
3 apples, peeled, cored & diced
2 cans pumpkin puree
4 cups vegetable stock
1 red bell pepper, diced small
1 tsp ginger
1 Tbsp curry powder
½ cup brown sugar

1) In a gallon saucepan, melt margarine over medium heat. Add apples and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2) Add remaining ingredients and still until the liquid has an even consistency. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.



Auditions for "CATS" Announced

The Amherst PTA announces auditions for their 63rd annual production, CATS! Auditions will be Sunday, January 4th from 1 – 5pm and Tuesday, January 6th from 6-8:00pm. Callbacks if necessary will be on Thursday January 8th from 6-8pm. Auditions will be held at Clark School, 7 Foundry Street, Amherst, NH 03031.

Cast members will portray cats, kittens, and dogs! Ages 3rd grade and older of all shapes and sizes (younger children will be considered with a parent also auditioning). Costuming will be appropriate for the character and individual playing that role. Please bring sheet music for a song you would like to sing, preferable in the style of the show. You may be asked to sing only a portion of the song for our experienced music director who will be able to understand your vocal range without hearing the entire song. Please wear comfortable clothing to learn a short dance as part of your audition. The cast list will be posted by Saturday, January 10th. For more information on the auditions and parts go to:

<https://sites.google.com/site/amherstptacatsauditioninfo/>

The Amherst PTA production is the largest fundraiser of the year, benefiting curriculum enrichment for Clark and Wilkins Elementary Schools and Amherst Middle School. The shows in the past have

been nominated and won numerous NH Theatre Awards and draw talent from the surrounding towns and communities. The Production Team is Director Alan D. Kaplan of Manchester, Assistant Director Roger Hurd of Amherst, Music Director Ken Grinnell of Manchester, Choreographer Vassiliki Anthimidou from VouliDance in Amherst, Stage Manager Sharron April, Master Set Builder Ben April, Costumes by Mary Selovski and Producers Jacqueline O'Dowd, Rita Piotrowski and Lisa Volonte.

Cats premiered in the West End at the New London Theatre in 1981. It held the record as London's longest running musical until 2006, when it was surpassed by Les Miserables. It won the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Musical in 1981 and made its Broadway debut in 1982, winning the Tony Award in 1983. Cats became the longest-running musical in Broadway history with 6,138 performances, ending its run with over 7,000 performances. Its Broadway record was surpassed by The Phantom of the Opera. It remains Broadway's second longest running show in history.

Composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber, the production of Cats is based on T.S. Eliot's Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats.

Questions regarding auditions or the production call Jackie at 582-5211.

Students in the News

Derryfield Students Inducted into the National Honor Society

MANCHESTER – Head of School Mary H. Carter is pleased to announce that Nicole T. Anthony and James K. O'Brien of AMHERST were inducted into the National Honor Society on Monday, October 27, 2014. The National Honor Society recognizes those students who, through their scholarship, service, leadership, and character, have contributed to their school and community. Derryfield recipients of the honor have volunteered with organizations such as Breakthrough Manchester, Habitat for Humanity, Special Olympics, and the Animal Rescue League. These students have also had leadership roles in the School's student government, athletic teams, and extracurricular activities, as well as in the wider community through the Manchester Youth Leadership Forum and other

local organizations. The faculty adviser to the group is Dennis F. Holland.

Williston Northampton School Announces Local Honor Roll Student

EASTHAMPTON, MA - The Williston Northampton School announces that the following student made the Honor Roll for the first trimester of the 2014-15 academic year.

Congratulations to Jasmin Movassaghi of Amherst who is a member of the Class of 2016, on achieving Honors.

Students earning High Honors are required to earn a grade point average of 92. Students earning Honors are required to earn a grade point average of 87.

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