



# *TRITON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*

NEWBURY • ROWLEY • SALISBURY

*From the office of Dr. Sandra J. Halloran*

## **News of the Week**

**January 29, 2010**

**Triton School Committee Meeting Schedule:** The Triton School Committee budget meetings will be held on February 3rd, February 10th, March 3rd, and March 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the high school library.

Do not miss a minute of the important budget discussions affecting the Triton Regional Schools over the next couple of months. Viking Television (VTV) will stream the school committee meetings LIVE on the web at [www.ustream.tv](http://www.ustream.tv) starting this Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. To view the webcast, copy and paste the following address into your web browser.

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/triton-regional-school-committee-meetings> or log onto [www.ustream.tv](http://www.ustream.tv) and search by Triton Regional School Committee. There were 66 online participants during Wednesday night's school committee meeting. Hopefully this number will continue to increase with each meeting.

**Salisbury Elementary Parents Linda Litcofsky and Darci Cepiel** took on a big scanning project to help Grades one and two elementary teachers have online access to additional materials for teaching math. Many thanks to these dedicated parents for their hours of hard work!

**Ms. Farley's Marine Biology Honors and Environmental Science Honors Students** are participating in an in depth research project exploring the natural history of our area (clamming, fishing, and whaling, among other topics.). They are working in conjunction with a grant obtained by Andrea Sargent. We will work with the students together - taking relevant field trips, collecting specimens, collecting data, etc. to construct a local natural history museum exhibit for the library.

Two Marine Biology honors classes had a guest speaker on Tuesday, January 26. Amanda Hope, a graduate student from UNH came to describe work being done in monitoring the Plum Island Estuary. This is one of 26 sites nationwide that is a long-term study site. Water samples are collected from 5 different locations and analyzed. The project has been going on since 1998. Fourteen of the students and I have volunteered to help in collecting water samples several times a week over the next few months for the project. This is the second year the students have participated in this project.

Ms. Farley's students that are doing volunteer work with UNH are also affiliated with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

**Ms. Ruhp's class at NES have sent Flat Stanleys out into the world!** Their Flat Stanleys left the Byfield / Newbury area in early December to see the country and beyond. Daily one or two Stanleys are returning to the classroom with pictures, post cards, and stories of their adventures both near and far. Students are creating bulletin boards in our hall with maps showing the places Stanley has visited.

**PGS teacher, John Collyer** will be traveling to Los Angeles for February vacation week to visit family and take his children to see the sights of California. While there, he will spend a school day at the Hobart Boulevard Elementary School and visit with Rafe Esquith, a well-known fifth grade teacher and author of Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire. John is excited for the opportunity to see Rafe's class first-hand and to be able to "speak quite a bit" with him throughout the day.

**Ms. Francescone's sixth grade class at SES** will begin a month long "Green Cup Challenge". Although I have not formally enrolled, her students would like to follow the guidelines of the challenge to see if we can make a difference.

Basically, for a month, starting Monday, January 25, they will try to encourage everyone to reduce the amount of electricity used. Hopefully they will come up with strategies to cut usage, and pass them along to the school community. At the end of the month, they will compare this year's usage to that of the past then will calculate the percentage of savings for this year. If all goes well, they may take on the formal challenge next year and compete with all of those private schools that are a part of this!!

**Mr. Fulgoni says THANKS to the PTA:** On behalf of the entire the middle faculty and staff, thank you [all] for the wonderful luncheon. In the midst of these gloomy fiscal times and budget cuts it is easy to get down trodden and lose sight of the many blessings that surround us. Your vibrant flowers, good food and warm spirits provided a much needed boost to us all. Thanks for this and all that the PTA has done for the Middle School.

Sincerely,  
Mr. Fulgoni

**NES is Holding a Family Math Night!** Please mark your calendars for Thursday, February 11th from 5:30-7:00 for Family Math Night at NES.

**TMS Team 7-3 held a Hats On For Haiti fundraiser** this week and raised over \$140.00 to send to Haiti!

**Deb Kerr, THS Nurse** is organizing a fundraiser for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. It is going to be a fun night out at the Georgetown VFW to support a wonderful cause. There will be live music, featuring local bands including Mel from Elm Street Music Fiddlers, and our own (or former) Cynthia Keefe as a vocalist for her group. Admission is \$25, with all proceeds going to Partners in Health.

If you cannot make it but are interested in donating, you can send a check made out to: Partners in Health to Deb Kerr. All donations are tax deductible.

[http://www.boston.com/news/world/latinamerica/articles/2010/01/24/boston\\_based\\_nonprofit\\_ha\\_s\\_been\\_thrust\\_into\\_leadership\\_role\\_in\\_haiti/?s\\_campaign=8315](http://www.boston.com/news/world/latinamerica/articles/2010/01/24/boston_based_nonprofit_ha_s_been_thrust_into_leadership_role_in_haiti/?s_campaign=8315)

**News from Guidance Director Kristen Lazzaro:** Salem State and Triton Regional High School are proud participants in the Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program. The Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program is a state-funded program managed and supported by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education in which Massachusetts high school students are able to enroll in college courses and simultaneously earn high school and college credit.

Fifteen Triton High School junior and senior students are enrolled in Composition 101 taught by Salem State Professor, Kerri Pearson. The class is an academic opportunity in addition to already scheduled classes and will be recorded on a student's high school transcript as an honors level elective class. Students will also receive a Salem State College transcript earning 3.0 credits toward their general education core at the college level that is transferable to a college of their choice. A bonus of taking and earning this dual enrollment credit is that there is no tuition cost to the student, a huge college savings! The class is being held at Triton on Monday evenings 6-9 pm during the spring semester.

The **High School Tomorrow's Teachers Club** students participated in a teacher job shadow for a day during the week of January 19<sup>th</sup>. Elementary teachers Aimee Farrell (SES), Debbie Dennehy (SES), Marion Jones (PGS), Holly Reynolds (PGS), Amy Merluzzi (SES, NES) and Ray Smoyer (NES) opened their classrooms to high school students Jessica Reusch, Danielle Mansur, Mallory Sanders, Jenna DiMento, Julia Pelletier, Korie Thurlow and Tyler Colbert. Thank you to the teachers and the many others who volunteered their classroom, expertise, and professionalism. We are hoping to make this an annual (or possibly more) event in the future.

**SES Linda Gangemi—Floor Hockey Sign-ups:** We are wrapping up basketball intramurals and taking sign-ups for Floor hockey to start after Feb. vacation.

**Follow Up On Previous “Celebrate Savings”:** Before I share additional information about savings we have achieved, I want to quickly circle back to the savings on the medical insurance I outlined a few weeks back. There have been questions this past week about possible savings in the dental insurance as well, namely by going with a reimbursement based plan rather than the fully insured plan we have with Delta Dental. I want to assure everyone that this option has been reviewed, and will continue to be reviewed as an option moving forward.

However, because medical and dental benefits are governed by MGL c.32B, we are required to vet all changes through an Insurance Advisory Committee, and more importantly we must negotiate all changes with our 5 collective bargaining associations (CBA's). Given that our entire dental program costs just under \$400,000 for all employees, and the medical insurance is estimated to cost \$5,000,000 for this coming year, we have chosen to focus our efforts on the savings available in the medical insurance. We have had a very positive relationship with the district CBA's and they have agreed to significant changes in plan design and contribution

levels. These are the savings that I spoke about a few weeks back that ANNUALLY save us \$528,893.

Our Insurance Advisory Committee continues to discuss possible changes in medical plans, and I anticipate that some additional changes will be made in the future. But given the large scale savings available in the medical plans, and the nature of the collective bargaining process, we have consciously made the choice to not focus on the dental insurance.

**Celebrate Savings:** The Triton Regional School District operates 652,576 ft<sup>2</sup> of school and office space on a daily basis. In order to maintain this operation, we consume a great deal of electricity over the course of a year. To that end, we have made concerted efforts in the areas of energy consumption. These efforts include power management software for our computers, adjusting temperatures to appropriate levels, and the basic education about turning off lights when you leave the room to name just a few.

In addition, we have just completed a lighting retrofit at the Middle/High School campus that replaced or retrofit every light fixture in the entire building. Motion sensors have also been installed in all classrooms and larger spaces to ensure lights are not left on when unnecessary. The estimates for this project show a 40% reduction in the lighting load on the campus. This project was subsidized by National Grid, which delivers our electricity to the buildings. All told, National Grid paid for 70% of the project, and the rest has been added to our monthly bill for a two year period with zero interest. This project should be available for both Newbury Elementary and Salisbury Elementary in FY10 and we are in the process of getting this started. Unfortunately, because Pine Grove School is part of the Rowley Municipal Light Department, we cannot take advantage of this National Grid program for their school.

In addition to the conservation efforts and lighting retrofits, we have also contracted our electricity with Constellation New Energy since December of 2004. Since that time we were locked at \$0.07/kWh which yielded significant savings over the market rates in the past several years. We estimate that we saved \$77,205 annually across the district due to the locked rates. We have now rolled to a more average \$0.11/kWh for the next two years.

For the Regional Middle/High School campus, we are estimating a savings of \$20,000 for next year. This includes the increase in kWh pricing, as well as the monthly charge for the lighting project. However, due to the amazing conservation efforts being made by staff and faculty, and the lighting project which provided 40% more efficient light fixtures, we are able to realize savings. Once the project is paid for, that annual savings will increase to the vicinity of \$70,000 for the Regional Middle/High School campus alone.