



New Milford Public Schools
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 860-355-8406
www.newmilfordps.org



New Milford High School
 860-350-6647

Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal
Mrs. Liz Curtis, Ass't. Principal
Dr. Christopher Longo, Ass't. Principal
Mr. Eric Williams, Ass't. Principal



Shaghticoke Middle School
 860-354-2204

Mrs. Dana Ford, Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, Ass't. Principal
Mrs. Emily Gervasio, Ass't. Principal
Mrs. Suzi Greene, Ass't. Principal
Dr. Len Tomasello, Transition Administrator



Sarah Noble Intermediate School
 860-210-4020

Mrs. Anne Bilko, Principal
Mrs. Emily Gervasio, Ass't. Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Meyers, Ass't. Principal
Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Ass't. Principal



Hill & Plain Elementary School
 860-354-5430

Mrs. Paula Kelleher, Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Hankla, Ass't. Principal



Northville Elementary School
 860-355-3713

Mrs. Susan Murray, Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, Ass't. Principal

Spotlight on New Milford Schools

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Summer 2015

Spotlight on John J. McCarthy Observatory*



If you are looking for a fun local experience to share with your family this summer you need not go any further than the grounds of New Milford High School, home to the John J. McCarthy Observatory (JJMO). This gem has been in operation since September of 2000, the same date that the “new” high school opened. Remarkably, the facility was designed by volunteers, primarily built by volunteers, and has been operated since its opening entirely by volunteers. Over 90% of all funding has come from private and foundation donations.

The observatory became an official non-profit in 2005 when it selected a Board of Directors and developed a documented relationship with the New Milford Board of Education and the Town of New Milford. This agreement ensures that the John J. McCarthy Observatory at New Milford High School and the John J.



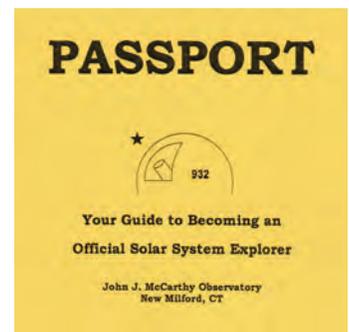
McCarthy Planetarium at Sarah Noble Intermediate School are utilized to further science literacy and critical thinking skills through education and public outreach. While the original observatory was much appreciated by astronomers and visitors, it lacked basic amenities such as water and a restroom, not making it conducive to long stays. This was remedied in 2006 when a significant facility expansion took place which added those items plus a storage room and a 1,000 square foot outdoor observation deck with four telescope piers that include power and signal cables.

This is a very special year for the Observatory as it celebrates its 15th year of community involvement and its 10th year of partnership with the Board of Education. Currently there are over thirty volunteers from

widely varied backgrounds, including artists and artisans, technicians and physicists, engineers and businesspeople, geologists and teachers, pilots and CEOs. All are united in their love of science and especially astronomy. Volunteers operate the observatory as an “open” space which can be visited at any time, with or without an appointment, as long as a volunteer operator is present. A highlight is the organization’s Second Saturday Stars (SSS) program which is held regularly on the second Saturday of each month. During the SSS events, an astronomy or science related presentation is delivered to attendees while other visitors look through either the main observatory instrument or any of the telescopes provided by the JJMO staff. Over 100 unique astronomy presentations have been given without ever repeating a topic!

Throughout the years, the Observatory has hosted several special artifacts including a wonderful meteorite collection, an exhibit of moon rocks brought back by Apollo astronauts, and an actual tire from the Space Shuttle from a mission to service the Hubble telescope in 1997. Current exhibits include high quality deep space images.

In 2009, volunteers designed and implemented a “true-scale” solar system model that traverses six miles of New Milford. Twelve beautifully designed solar system objects were placed at proper distances from the scale model sun located at the observatory, all on publicly-accessible property. Anyone interested in taking a journey through New Milford’s Scale Solar System, where the sun is six feet in diameter and Pluto is four miles away, can pick up a pamphlet at the New Milford Public Library with locations and directions. The pamphlet comes complete with a “passport” for recording your journey. Bring along a pencil to make rubbings of the brass planet symbols found on the informational sign at each sculpture and then have your passport stamped at the Library when your journey is complete.



While night time visits to the Observatory are a high point, volunteers have made sure that a day time visit is also worthwhile. In 2010, they began construction of “Galileo’s Garden”, a multiyear project involving a large sundial, plantings and garden sculptures. The centerpiece sundial is a nine-foot tall stainless steel equatorial sundial containing a precise bronze replica of Galileo’s first telescope constructed in 1609. The garden itself, now five years in the making, has over 300 perennial specimens, representing over 40 varieties of trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers. Presently a volunteer team of master gardeners, working out of the UConn Bethel Extension, are doing extensive planting to evolve it into a butterfly sanctuary, on a path to become certified as such. They plan on making the space a true “science teaching garden” for young visitors, with ways to explore and learn through informative and exciting hands-on activities.

The McCarthy Observatory facility itself consists of a main observing deck for visitors and a control room/classroom area. All areas are fully ADA compliant. Computer and camera monitors assist with control and image viewing. Since its opening, the Observatory has been dedicated to supporting the scientific community's efforts to locate, identify and refine the orbits of Near Earth Objects (NEO) which have the potential for catastrophically impacting the earth. JJMO has earned and maintains its designation by the International Astronomical Union as Observatory 932 by proving its capability of determining and providing highly accurate astrometric data that is used by the Minor Planet Center at Harvard University to maintain a database of all asteroids and comets and their orbits. In this capacity, volunteers have mentored New Milford and other area students in asteroid and comet observations and more recently in deep space imaging. This imagery is shared with the general public at the New Milford Public Library and at New Milford High School and through popular calendars and notecards.



Educational outreach is an important point of emphasis for Observatory volunteers and they reach out to the community in a number of ways, including offering Adult Education classes and producing a monthly Astronomy calendar. The Observatory itself is a popular field trip destination for elementary through high school classes.



Elementary students participate in the Observatory's "1,000 Suns for New Milford" sunflower planting program. Students plant over 17 varieties of sunflowers. Seeds harvested from the previous year are used successfully, helping students understand the cycle of planting. The program is currently utilizing its fifth generation of seeds from the inaugural planting year.

Observatory volunteers also make visits to the schools to share their expertise. Members have conducted over 100 classroom science sessions annually as part of their "Astronomy To Go" (ATG) curriculum support for SNIS faculty and students. The SNIS Planetarium is used independently by teachers and also for sessions by visiting volunteers. A highlight of the school year for 6th graders is the annual "Stump the Astronomers Day" where students challenge Observatory volunteers with researched science questions.



At the high school level, volunteers continue to support the Astronomy class and mentor individual students. This year the Observatory was honored to be asked to participate in the community oversight

committee for New Milford High School's STEM initiative in which the Project Lead the Way program received national certification. In May of this year, volunteers celebrated the 25th birthday of the Hubble telescope with a special cake which included a detailed model of the telescope assembled from parts printed for them on the 3D printer in the STEM lab at NMHS. Talk about a fun collaboration!



For the future, observatory volunteers are exploring ways to expand their existing working space so that they can offer even more programs in support of the community and continue to share their love of science. In the meantime, why not take advantage of one of these clear summer evenings to make a visit and see just what the stars have to offer?

**Information taken from the John J. McCarthy annual reports and website.*

NMHS Science Teacher named State Finalist for 2015 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching



The state selection committee for the 2015 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) Program has chosen **Mrs. Erin Lucia** as a State Finalist in recognition of her outstanding contributions to science education in Connecticut. Her application packet is one of only four statewide that have been forwarded to the National Science Foundation for review at the national level. Mrs. Lucia presently teaches science classes at New Milford High School in AP Physics and the Project Lead the Way Program.

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) are the highest honors bestowed by the United States government specifically for K-12 mathematics and science (including computer science) teaching. Established by Congress in 1983, the PAEMST program authorizes the President to bestow up to 108 awards each year.

The award recognizes those teachers who develop and implement a high-quality instructional program that is informed by content knowledge and enhances student learning. Since the program's inception, more than 4,300 teachers have been recognized for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession.

As a State Finalist, Mrs. Lucia will be recognized in the coming year at events hosted by the Governor and the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Update on Transition

How many times have you packed up and moved in your lifetime? If the answer is even once then you appreciate all the details that go into a move. Now imagine that move on the scale of a “house” as big as the JPS building and you can envision how busy our Facilities and Administrative staffs have been this summer. From the little details like forwarding mail to the big details like moving furniture, it has been quite the undertaking.

Cleaning out – Moving in

At the end of every school year all of the schools get rid of damaged, broken and aged-out items and this year was no different. Once that task is completed, the Facilities Department begins the summer work needed to make sure our buildings are ready for the return of students and staff in August.



There are many projects that take place every summer. District-wide, all floors are re-waxed, all carpets shampooed, restrooms sanitized, and walls and other surfaces cleaned. The department sands and recoats every wood gymnasium floor, and seals the synthetic gym floors throughout the district, as well as inspects and services all gym partition doors. They pump, inspect and dispose of waste from every septic and grease tank at each of our facilities that have such tanks. All fire extinguishers, fire alarms, emergency lights and fire suppression systems district-wide are inspected and repaired as needed. All kitchen ductwork and hood systems in every kitchen in the district are cleaned and inspected. They clean, service and repair all boilers, burners and hot water heaters in every Board of Education building. Any stained and damaged ceiling tiles in hallways, classrooms and restrooms are replaced as needed. In addition, they replenish all of the playgrounds' bark mulch to meet safety standards.

On top of these projects, Facilities staff, with the assistance of professional movers, have packaged and transferred all materials requested by teachers and staff moving to new locations. In addition, the district is in the process of moving all furniture, equipment and other safe and date-compliant materials from the JPS building to our other schools for current and future use. The JPS playground equipment is being dismantled and moved to HPS, NES and SNIS where it will be put to good use by our students. Once this work is completed, a walk-through of JPS will be conducted with the Mayor to determine what, if any, materials can be utilized by the Town.



Libraries

District library media specialists collaboratively decided on how best to restructure the combined district collection for the reconfigured schools. A professional library moving company has been busy at work making this happen. They tagged all books to be moved, determined if shelving in their new sites would have to be adjusted and then busily made it so. Students and parents will be pleased to find that all libraries will be ready to go for the students' return in August.

Registration and Scheduling

Administrative staff spend much of the summer months tracking the comings and goings of students, since final scheduling of classes is determined by current student enrollment numbers. These numbers change right up to the first day of school and beyond! That is why students do not receive class information and schedules until shortly before school starts. All parents should watch their email for 2015-2016 Back-to-School information for students.

Bus Routes for 2015-2016

Bus routes are another item which is affected by current student enrollment. These are expected to be posted on the district website by August 10th and should appear in the local newspaper shortly thereafter.



Summer Open House Dates **(Watch your email for details)**



NMHS Grade 9 Orientation
August 17 10:00 a.m. to noon

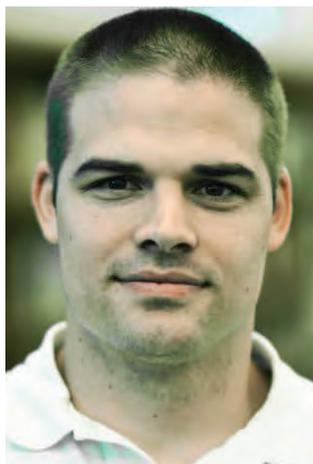
SMS Walk Through
August 21 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

SNIS Open House Grades 4&5
August 21 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

SNIS Open House Grade 3
August 21 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

HPS and NES Meet the Teacher Open House, K-2
August 21 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

New Milford High School Welcomes New Assistant Principal



Mr. Eric Williams has joined the New Milford Public Schools as an Assistant Principal at New Milford High School. Mr. Williams comes to New Milford from the Danbury Public Schools where he had worked since 2008 as a Social Studies Teacher at Danbury High School. Mr. Williams had been Social Studies Department Head there since 2012 as well as the School Testing Coordinator.

Mr. Williams' educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education/History from Western CT State University, a Master of Science in Literacy Education K-12 from the University of New England and his 6th year degree in Educational Leadership from Sacred Heart University.

Mr. Williams began work in July and is already settling in at NMHS as part of the high school's administrative team. He looks forward to meeting students upon their return to school in August.

Interested in Volunteering?

The Board of Education recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to our schools. The Board supports a volunteer program that encourages community residents to take an active role to become school volunteers subject to suitable regulations and safeguards.

The New Milford Public Schools recognizes that just about any volunteer situation may result in direct contact with students. Our obligation to take appropriate measures to keep our children safe is one of our primary concerns. We require criminal history checks, at no cost to you, of all adults who wish to act as volunteers in our schools or chaperones on our field trips.

In order to volunteer, whether in the classroom, school or on a field trip, it is necessary for you to be fingerprinted. This takes place through the district's Human Resources department. However, if you have already been fingerprinted and have actively volunteered each year, you need not be fingerprinted again. You should check with the secretary to the principal in your child's school.

Fingerprinting dates will be made available through the school office once school begins. If you are planning to volunteer at any time during the school year, you must sign up with your child's teacher and plan to be fingerprinted earlier rather than later. More information will be given to you from the school. We look forward to having you join us as school volunteers.





**New Milford Public
Schools**

50 East Street
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860-355-8406

Dr. JeanAnn C. Paddyfote
Superintendent

Mr. Joshua Smith
Deputy Superintendent

Ms. Ellamae Baldelli
Human Resources Director

Mr. John Calhoun
Facilities Manager

Mr. Jay Hubelbank
Fiscal Services & Operations Director

Mrs. Laura Olson
Pupil Personnel & Special Services
Director

Ms. Roberta Pratt
Technology Director

Mrs. Sandra Sullivan
Food Services Director

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Mr. Dave Littlefield
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Mr. David A. Lawson
Assistant Secretary

Mr. Robert Coppola

Mr. David R. Shaffer

Mrs. Daniele Shook

Mr. John W. Spatola

Mrs. Theresa Volinski

Summer Memories

Before you start checking off items on your back to school to-do list, take a moment to savor the special memories of summer adventures and think about preserving them with one of these family projects.

- ◆ Create a **Summer Journal or Scrapbook**: take some of those maps and brochures you collected along the way, add some notes and make an album your family can remember during the cold days of winter. Research digital scrapbooking for an added twist.
- ◆ Make a **Vacation Memory Jar**: Fill a clear jar with the little trinkets that your children brought back with them, including the little souvenirs that usually end up in a drawer, and put it on display labeled with the vacation destination.
- ◆ **Display Photos** in a collage, special frame or shadow box. Buy plain bordered ones and let your children customize them. Use a favorite photo as your computer's screensaver or as the background wallpaper on your phone. Visit one of the many on-line sites that offer the service and create your own custom post-cards, photo book or video montage.
- ◆ Build a **Time Capsule**: add vacation photos to a thumb drive and put that and assorted souvenirs in a box to be opened right before next summer's vacation season starts or in the middle of winter when you need a boost. If you are really adventurous, hide the box and make a treasure hunt part of the fun.
- ◆ Make a **Summer Recipe Book**: Have everyone in the family list their favorite foods from this summer and make a special book out of just those recipes.

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The mission of the New Milford Public Schools, a collaborative partnership of students, educators, family and community, is to prepare each and every student to compete and excel in an ever-changing world, embrace challenges with vigor, respect and appreciate the worth of every human being, and contribute to society by providing effective instruction and dynamic curriculum, offering a wide range of valuable experiences, and inspiring students to pursue their dreams and aspirations.