

With fewer jobs for graduates, district rethinks its roles

SWR examines relation of free education and free society at first community forum

BY CAITLIN FERRELL
news@tbrnewsletters.com

The Shoreham-Wading River school district's new superintendent, Steven Cohen, has started a new tradition; community forums, held once a month in the high school library. The first forum topic, on the link between free society and free public education, was held Thursday, Oct. 6. Sixteen people, including district employees and concerned parents, attended.

Cohen began the forum with an informal introduction. He spoke of the relationship between a free education and a free society, and how the economic crisis has bred uncertainty. With a daughter in college, he said he has "more than a fleeting moment" to worry about her future, as it is unclear "what the future of these kids really looks like."

Cohen said the economy seems to be stabilizing but with far fewer jobs for young people than there once were. With college no longer a golden investment, the role of high schools is changing.

Community member Michelle Belsky said, "Not everybody fits into the college mold."

Stephen Donohue, principal of Wading River Elementary School, said, "The jobs, you don't even know what they're going to be."

He wondered aloud about the value of a college education and mentioned that in relation to Apple founder Steve Jobs's recent death, many news stories noted that Jobs was a college dropout. "He was smarter than professors," Donohue said. "Why include that?"

Of the current economic crisis, Alisa McMorris, Wading River Elementary PTA president, pointed out the high cost



Photo by Caitlin Ferrell

SWR Superintendent Steven Cohen, left, and Shoreham resident Christine Zukowski.

of education in New York state. McMorris asked if there is a difference in quality of education here and in states that have a lower cost of living. "It's cheaper, but is there a sacrifice in education? I don't have an answer, I don't know."

Cohen said, "If we were to diminish this institution, where are the kids going to get what they need ... ?" and added that the budget could "easily" be cut in half. But, "What would the Shoreham-Wading River district look like?"

Louis Parrinello, principal of Miller Avenue School, jumped into the conversation, asking, "What are schools? They're places of learning." He offered a metaphor: when you remove parts off a car, at what point does it stop being a car and become only another part?

Christine Zukowski, a Shoreham

resident and wife of board member John Zukowski, said, "The cost of the institution is mind-boggling to many." The budget, just under \$60 million, will likely face cuts next year.

Belsky said, "We've never seen things converge like this. It's kind of like the 'perfect storm.'"

There were more questions than answers Thursday night, as attendees bounced ideas off one another. The district's financial burden will likely continue to be a topic throughout the year. Talk turned to ways of improving education in the district, namely through the use of technology. Many of the attendees agreed there is a lag in the classroom.

Donohue said, "We, the administrators in the institution, don't appreciate

Continued on page A10

'When you remove parts off a car, at what point does it stop being a car and become only another part?' That's the metaphor one educator offered for schools as places for learning.

SAVE THE DATES!

December 2nd • 3rd 4th, 2011



HONOR A LOVED ONE THIS YEAR!

At the 16th Annual Dickens Festival

consider adopting a Dickens Lantern in the memory of a loved one or to acknowledge someone special. The cost of \$1,500 includes a plaque with up to 21 letters (additional letters \$.50 cents ea.) of your choice to recognize your special someone.

All lanterns are dedicated at the opening ceremony of the Dickens Festival on Friday, December 2.

For information contact the Greater Port Jefferson Arts Council at 631-473-5220 or email: info@gpjac.org www.pjdickens.com



©118729



Owned and Operated by:
Diane Rutkowsky Faulknor, MA, CCC/A
NYS Licensed Audiologist & Hearing Aid Dispenser.
Over 18 Years of Experience.

Think Hearing Devices Won't Work For You?

- Exciting new advances in hearing aid technology make it more possible than ever before!
- Let me help you hear the way you deserve to hear!

Call 631-403-4885 for your FREE HEARING SCREENING & CONSULTATION!

North Shore Hearing P.C.
www.northshorehearingpc.com

118772

MOUNT SINAI Port View Building 28 North Country Road, Suite 201
WADING RIVER 2042 North Country Road, Suite 103 (Directly Across From the Duck Pond)

news

on demand

northshoreoflongisland.com

©103557



Photo by Caitlin Ferrell

Louis Parrinello in forefront, Steven Cohen in back right.

SWR FORUM

Continued from page A9

the potential as much as they do.”

Louis Parrinello said it used to be that students attended school for information; now they go home to find out information. “They can go to Stanford University tonight,” he said, of an on-line program. “You can watch the actual lectures as if you’re there.”

Zukowski commented “We need technology, that’s the language.”

Belsky opined that not every student needs a laptop and called a Smart Board

‘We need technology, that’s the language.’

— CHRISTINE ZUKOWSKI, SHOREHAM

a “glorified chalkboard.”

The role technology could play in the classroom seemed to still be a question mark for many of the attendees. How the district will implement new technology while it struggles with budget cuts is unknown.

The next community forum will be held Nov. 17 at 7 pm in the high school library. Topic: How schools work.

ADVERTISEMENT

Funeral Facts



Ralph G. Ferrara
Over 25 Years of Service

Q: If I have already made funeral arrangements, do I have to start over again if I move?

A: What happens depends on the funeral home where you made your original arrangements and whether it is affiliated with other funeral homes near your new home. At some funeral homes, moving can be complicated. You may have to request a refund, and considerable paperwork and cancellation fees may apply, depending on your agreement.

At our funeral home, the process is much simpler. We are part of the largest national network of funeral providers, which offers a National Transferability program. If you move more than 75 miles away, any other funeral home in our extensive network will honor your plans. Your arrangements can move with you, so you shouldn’t be concerned about making your funeral plans with us now.

Planning your funeral in advance is so important for your peace of mind and that of your family. We assure you that any plan you make with us will be honored by any one of our 1,500 North American locations and will be transferred to the funeral home of your choice, worry-free. You can visit www.dignitymemorial.com to see how far our network reaches.

Ralph G. Ferrara has been in the funeral service industry for over 25 years and is a manager with O.B. Davis Funeral Homes, members of the Dignity Memorial® network serving the Miller Place community. He frequently offers funeral-related advice and counseling to area families. For information or to ask a question, contact Ralph at 631-744-1001.

New York State law mandates that all contracts for prearranged funeral agreements executed by applicants for or recipients of supplemental social security income or medical assistance be irrevocable

©119488



Photo by Brittany Wait

Husking the harvest

Joan Cioffi of Mt. Sinai, a regular visitor to Lewin Farms in Calverton, husks some of the corn that she was looking to bring home to her family on Columbus Day. For a video of that day at the farm, including pumpkin picking, visit our website at www.northshoreoflongisland.com.

Anniversary tea for world’s largest radio transmission station

BY SUSAN RISOLI
srisoli@tbrnewspapers.com

The 6,000-acre, former RCA site in Rocky Point is being honored Sunday, Oct. 16 to celebrate its 90th anniversary, which is officially Nov. 5. The site, located in front of the Frank J. Carasiti School along Yaphank-Rocky Point Road — or what is informally known as Marconi Boulevard — housed the world’s largest radio transmission station until 1978, said Natalie Stiefel, president of the Rocky Point Historical Society and board member of the Long Island Radio and TV Historical Society.

The property is now part of the state Department of Environmental Conservation’s Pine Barrens land. The Rocky Point Historical Society will host a tea to celebrate the anniversary, Sunday, Oct. 16 at the VFW Hall on King Road in Rocky Point. The \$15 admission includes food, a performance on an electronic instrument known as the theremin, and displays of broadcasting artifacts. Though the advent of satellite communication made the transmission station obsolete, “People all over the world still remember the home of RCA was Rocky Point,” said Stiefel.