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Edgemont maintains how to comply with new regulations

By DEBBIE ANDERSON

The attitude among administrators regarding the state’s new mandated annual professional performance review for teachers might best be expressed by the classic ad for Hebrew National hot dogs, “We answer to a higher authority.” In this case, that authority is the Edgemont School District. At Tuesday’s meeting of the Edgemont Board of Education, assistant principal Paul Ganesanathan presented an overview of what the state would require, how the district would address those requirements, and a timeline in which it will be executed.

In a 71-page report released this month on the website nysed.gov, the APPR stipulates that teachers’ performance would be rated on four levels of achievement: highly effective, developing, ineffective, and emergency. Twenty percent of the assessments would be based on state selected measures, 20 percent on local measures and 60 percent on teacher/principal assessments.

It was not clear what was meant by the term “local.” Ganesanathan said the teacher/principal assessment portion would most likely employ Edgemont’s teacher-leaming model of the state that has been followed since 2005.

The APPR, which was adopted in the board’s resolution on Sept. 13, is not expected to be applicable until the Edgemont Teachers’ Association negotiates a new contract, which takes effect July 1 of 2013. Until that time, Ganesanathan and high school English teacher Chris
tice Cicerone will use the model as its guideline in professional development and to maintain high standards of teaching.

Nonpartisan group revises amendment

By LINDA LEAVITT

The Scarsdale Procedure Committee has considered and written comments on its proposed amendments to the nonpartisan resolution that governs village election and adopted a new draft. Residents will vote on the amendments at the Citizens Nominating Committee election Nov. 15. The CNC, comprised of representatives from each of the village’s five elementary school neighborhoods, nominates nonpartisan candidates for mayor, village trustee and village justice.

Elections for the Scarsdale Village Board are traditionally uncontested and conducted according to the nonpartisan resolution, originally adopted in 1930, and subsequently amended 39 times. The goal of the nonpartisan system remains eliminating Citizens Party candidates by consensus without regard to political affiliation. Independent candidates have occasionally challenged the establishment, but the Citizens Party usually prevailed.

In contrast to elections for mayor and village trustee, the nominating committee elections are contested by design, though not along national party lines. Each elementary school area is supposed to have a choice of four candidates and elect two each year.

The deliberations were strictly confidential, and politics and political considerations were kept out of the process. The proposed amendments to the resolution released to members have always been discussed in the meeting last fall. Both the Citizens Justice Committee, which proposed the nonpartisan resolution, and the Scarsdale Forum provided a civic review of the system’s effectiveness in the upcoming election. However, Processor Proseman Michelle Saieh-Simonsen, who attended the meeting last fall, said our work was not all for nothing. “This is my first time running for office, and I’m not sure if I’ll win, but at least I can be trusted with the job.”

The forum’s review was generally positive, but it also acknowledged that the system should be allowed to continue, with the possibility of changes in the future. They also praised the CJB’s efforts to maintain the integrity of the nonpartisan system.

The meeting last fall was well attended, with over 100 people calling for more involvement in the village’s election process. A few residents did not say if they would vote in the election or not.

Library celebrates its 60th birthday with fun and festivities

By LINDA LEAVITT

The Scarsdale Free Public Library celebrates its 60th birthday with a week of festivities to be held at the Library. A variety of activities are planned, including a special birthday party on Saturday, Sept. 30, which will feature cake, ice cream, and other treats. The library will also be hosting a book sale on Sunday, Oct. 1, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission to the sale is free and there will be a variety of books available for purchase.

The library is also planning a series of events throughout the week to celebrate their 60th birthday. These events will include a special storytime for children on Wednesday, Oct. 5, at 11 a.m. and a lecture on the history of the library on Thursday, Oct. 6, at 7 p.m. The library will also be hosting a special exhibit on local history on Friday, Oct. 7, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In addition to the events, the library will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day from Monday to Saturday, and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. The library is located at 15 East Gate Dr. in Scarsdale. For more information, please call 914-723-1100.

Dr. Charles Liu, with the American Museum of Natural History’s Space Science Center, spoke to students at Scarsdale High School Friday.

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