

GRADUATION 2021

Sweet Home High School

Below: Senior Jailen Gaines is all smiles during graduation ceremonies.



Above: Caroline Thiele poses for a picture with Principal Antonio Perry after walking across the stage.



Above: Valedictorian Heather Plourde delivers her address to the Class of 2021.



Above: Brian Gerena, Jr. shakes hands with Superintendent Anthony Day after receiving his diploma.



Above: Senior Daniel Gutsu stands and recites the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of Sweet Home's graduation ceremonies on Thursday, June 24.

Photos provided by Sweet Home CSD

Healthy Youth Column: What's all the 'talk' about?

If you have seen lawn signs, banners, fliers, and newspaper announcements telling you to talk, you can thank the Amherst Task Force for Healthy Community*Healthy Youth. With grant funding from the Western Regional Addiction Resource Collaborative, the Amherst Task Force has been conducting a campaign to Prevent Underage Drinking in our community. Throughout the campaign the Task Force is providing parents with information necessary to be aware of signs and risk factors of a young person engaging in dangerous behaviors. Over 80% of young people ages 10 to 18 say their parents are the leading influence on their decision whether to drink or not. Too often adults make the mistake of assuming their children know how they feel about alcohol and other drug use, but if you have not spoken to them about it, how could they know?

The "TalkitOver.org" website is

all about not assuming, but having the conversation, the real, face-to-face kind. By doing so, you show you care about your teen's health, wellness, and success. At times it may not seem like what you are saying is making a difference. That's the time to visit the website and discover new ways to talk about serious issues with your children. Armed with accurate information you will be able to build your child's skills and confidence so that when the time comes, they are ready for it.

Social media, along with the pandemic, have hijacked many of the communication skills that young

people were taught. These skills have been transferred to Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok in a language that many parents don't understand.

Real communication is taking place less and less often. When was the last time you and your child had a serious conversation about drinking?

Or smoking, doing drugs, taking a prescription, their mental health and more? Remember to visit the website so that you are prepared to have those tough talks. Research show that the more often you have conversations with your children around drinking and doing other drugs, the less risky their behav-

ior is. When parents take the time to talk to their young people about serious issues, it shows that young person that you care. Do you assume your child knows how you feel about things? If it has been a while since you made the time to have a good talk, this is the time, to make the time, to "Talk it Over."

Summer is a beautiful time of the year, but it is also the time when young people will take their first drink. The increase in the availability of alcohol combined with the fact that young people have more unsupervised time, present an opportunity to experiment. Be extra aware of the events taking place at this time of year – graduation parties, weddings, festivals and other summer expectations. Join the Amherst Task Force in providing a safe, healthy environment for Amherst families.

Remember to "Talk it Over" every chance you get. It is never too late to start the conversation.



Campus News

Colette Deppe of East Amherst was named to the spring 2021 dean's list at the University of Scranton. A student must achieve a GPA of 3.5 or higher to qualify.

Madeleine Rohan of Williamsville graduated from Ithaca College with a BFA in writing for film, TV, and Emerging Media.

The following students were named to the spring 2021 dean's list at the University of Tampa: Garrett House of Getzville, and John Welsh of East Amherst.

The following students were named to the spring 2021 dean's list at SUNY Oneonta: Alyssa Buonocore of Williamsville, Cara Buonocore of Williamsville, and Caroline Kennedy of Williamsville.

Stephanie Hossenlopp graduated from Bradley University as a member of the spring 2021 class.

The following students were named to the spring 2021 commissioner's academic honor roll at SUNY Cortland: Amanda Gaffney of Williamsville, and Jona Hildreth of Williamsville.

Bee What's Going On

Audubon hosts holistic workshop

The Audubon library is hosting a holistic lecture workshop via zoom. The series will take place at 2 p.m. Wednesday, June 30, July 28, and Aug. 18. The series will feature hour-long lectures about lawn care, green cleaning and the connection between nutrition and the environment. Registration is required and can be made at: tinyurl.com/SummerSeries2021.

St. Mary Swormville holds 5K

St. Mary's Swormville will hold its chowder chase 5K and family picnic on Saturday, July 17 and Sunday, July 18. The event will be held at St. Mary Swormville, 6919 Transit Road. More details will be announced. To sign up, register, or learn more visit: stmaryswormville.org.