



**SPRING FEVER** — Mark Maraschiello runs with his dog, Copper, on Cheshire Drive this past weekend. Many Amherst residents were outside enjoying the warmer temperatures.

Photo by Jim Smerecak  
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## Reynolds pushes for hotline for soldiers, veterans, families

Rep. Thomas M. Reynolds, R-Amherst, has called for creation of a coordinated hotline for soldiers, veterans and families.

Reynolds directed his request to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates; Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson; the co-chairs of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors, Bob Dole and Donna Shalala; and the new interagency task force.

The hotline would be a 1-800 number that would collect information in a central location to prevent further problems such as those that arose at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, now under investigation for substandard living conditions for recovering servicemen and women.

"We need to address this and take action immediately. By setting up a coordinated hotline, our soldiers, veterans and their families will have a place to voice complaints and concerns that will be heard, documented and acted upon," Reynolds said.

Reynolds sent a letter to Gates urging the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to coordinate with both the bipartisan commission and the interagency task force in setting up a hotline. Reynolds wrote:

"Our soldiers and families need to know that these problems are being dealt with, not by some faceless bureaucrat, but by the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs themselves ... By demonstrating the seriousness that your offices, and you personally, take these problems, we can show our soldiers, veterans and their families that we will not stand by the same old way of doing things."

"We need to demonstrate that there have been changes in the attitude of the commanders at Walter Reed and other hospitals. One mechanism that can demonstrate this is a coordinated hotline between the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the new bipartisan presidential commission on care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors and the interagency task force for soldiers, veterans and their families."

He said by setting up a coordinated hotline for soldiers, veterans and their families, immediate action can be taken to improve the military healthcare system by hearing directly from those who use the system.

## ElderWood residents come through for Variety Kids

ElderWood Senior Care skilled nursing and assisted living facility residents have spent the last few months selling red paper hearts, candy bars and ice scrapers, as well as holding bake sales, rummage sales, basket raffles and other special events, as part of their yearly efforts to raise funds for the Variety Kids Telethon.

This year, ElderWood's 12 Western New York facilities donated \$11,078 to benefit Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo, all of which was raised directly by the residents, with the support of staff, family members and the community.

A representative from each facility was on hand March 4 to present individual donations live on-air during the 2007 Variety Kids Telethon.

ElderWood Health Care at Oakwood resident Elizabeth Arnone presented a donation of \$2,168; ElderWood Health Care at Wedgewood resident Frances Rubenstein presented a donation of \$700; Eric Whitlocke presented ElderWood Health Care at Heathwood's donation of \$1,037; and residents Sylvia Kirisits and Russell Bauda presented ElderWood Village at Glenwood's \$650 donation.

## Goin' Bald for Bucks kicks off sixth campaign

Western New York students, teachers, administrators and corporate employees from across the country are "Goin' Bald" once again this year to benefit cancer research and patient care at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

The "Goin' Bald for Bucks" fundraiser, a campaign that asks participants to collect pledges in return for shaving their heads or cutting off at least 10 inches of hair — which is donated to Locks of Love — kicked off on March 9 at Roswell Park, with RPCI's own employees taking turns in the barber chair to support the effort.

During the past five years, Goin' Bald for Bucks has become a favorite fundraiser among high schools and businesses, raising nearly \$250,000. The dollars are applied each year to research showing the greatest promise to help save lives, and for support programs for patients and their families.

Goin' Bald is celebrating its sixth anniversary and more than 10 schools and businesses are already signed up to clip, snip and shave the way toward cancer cures.

Lake Shore Senior High School history teacher, Anthony George, founded the campaign as a tribute to his sister, Cathleen George, and to other patients, at the time of Cathleen's cancer fight. Cathleen succumbed to cancer on March 13, 2004, and Goin' Bald for Bucks has since become even more

special, says George, with more and more people coming to him each year to learn how they can help.

"I can tell you from personal experience that it is nearly impossible for family members and friends to 'sit by' while their loved ones undergo chemotherapy and radiation therapy that often cause hair loss," he said. "This event allows participants to show their loved ones just how much they care."

Nick A. Stento, a clinical research nurse at Roswell Park, took part in the kickoff event because he believes in the idea that "charity starts at home." Stento said that he feels that it is important to help raise money that will stay right here at Roswell Park so that the Institute's world-class researchers can continue their search for cures.

"We are all here for one reason — to further the mission of Roswell Park, which we can accomplish by supporting our researchers and doing whatever we can to give our patients the best care possible," said Stento.

Daemen College is one of the organizations that has joined the fundraiser.

For details on how to start a Goin' Bald for Bucks team or to make a secure online financial donation, visit [www.roswellpark.org/giving](http://www.roswellpark.org/giving). You can also call Steve Hannon at 845-8164 or e-mail [steve.hannon@roswellpark.org](mailto:steve.hannon@roswellpark.org) for more information.

## Rath requests Achievers' Awards nominations

State Senator Mary Lou Rath, R-Amherst, is asking residents to nominate an outstanding individual to receive an Achievers' Award from Senate District 61 in Erie County.

She is encouraging all residents in the district who live in Erie County to send in nominations for her consideration.

The Achievers' Award is given in conjunction with the annual New York State Senate Disabilities Awareness Day. The award provides the Senate with the opportunity to honor individuals who have overcome physical or mental challenges to make important contributions to their

communities, as well as honoring people who have made exceptional contributions to the disabilities field.

"I am so proud to have the opportunity to name an outstanding individual to receive this year's Achievers' Award from my District," Rath said. "So many people's lives are affected by a disability. To overcome one shows true courage and strength of character. Those who work to better the lives of individuals with disabilities are truly the unsung heroes of the community. Both groups of people deserve recognition for the outstanding work they do every day."

Nominees must have or have had significant physical and/or mental challenges and must have demonstrated special achievements and contributions to their communities.

Nominees may also be those who are not disabled themselves but who have made outstanding contributions to the field of disabilities.

To make a nomination, send identifying information, as well as a brief description of why your nominee deserves the Achievers' Award, to Senator Rath's district office at 5500 Main St., Suite 260, Williamsville, NY 14221. Nominations are due by March 19.

## North High School student honored as Outstanding Teenager In Community

Motivated, dedicated and extraordinary are just a few words chosen to describe Joseph Maxwell who has been recognized by Next Step Magazine as a 2007 Super Teen. As a result of this honor, Maxwell will be featured on the cover of the March/April issue of the magazine.

Next Step Magazine, online at [www.nextSTEP-mag.com](http://www.nextSTEP-mag.com), is a nationally distributed college, career and life-planning magazine for high school students. The Super Teens contest was founded to honor outstanding teenagers in the community. Now in its 10th year, the 2007 contest recognized 161 Super Teens throughout the U.S.

"The Super Teen award is given to students whose performance extends beyond the classroom walls," said Laura Jeanne Hammond, editor-in-chief of Next Step Magazine. "We are pleased to recognize Joseph with this prestigious award."

Teens, like Maxwell are not only dedicated to their academic careers, but are also actively

involved in their community. In fact, according to a recent Next Step survey of these super teens, more than half spend four or more hours per week participating in community service activities with almost 10 percent volunteering 10 or more hours a week. Ninety-eight percent of the teens surveyed are also members of their high school math or science club, school newspaper, sports team or drama club, underscoring their ability to manage their time.

When asked what makes them stand apart from their peers, the majority of students felt it was their commitment to reaching goals and strict work ethic. These qualities will serve them well in the future, as 44 percent are looking towards challenging careers in either politics, teaching or medicine.

"Each year we are amazed at the teens' accomplishments," Hammond said. "At a young age they are conscious about the importance of focusing on their education and helping others, which will provide valuable life lessons for life after high school."

## Amherst resident, Morrisville State College student participates in homeless shelter project

Homeless shelters made by students in Morrisville State College's Architectural Studies and Design and Landscape Architectural Studies programs will be on display in March in the Winner Gallery at the Stone Quarry Hill Art Park in Cazenovia.

Architectural studies and design student Christopher Goodsell of Amherst is one of 23 stu-

dents to participate in creating the exhibit. The shelters were created for a class project that addressed homelessness and the architecture of shelter.

The project required students to design an architecturally pleasing shelter that addressed the issues of sustainability, social responsibility and leadership. Teams researched rural homelessness be-

fore they built their shelters.

Staying within a specific budget, teams were challenged to build low-cost shelters intended to protect one individual from the elements.

Students tapped into their creativity to build the shelters, some using donated and recycled materials and used items to remain within their \$75 budget.