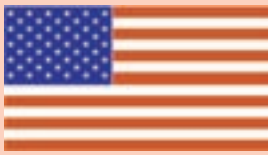




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Inside



Father's Day

Hundreds of entries in The Bee's "Draw Your Dad" contest are published this week. See classified section

Honored adults

The Amherst Avenue of Athletes adds three dedicated citizens. See page 24

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Village of Williamsville
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Amherst Central Schools
Sweet Home Central Schools
Williamsville Central Schools

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Amherst superintendent retires; plans for future yet unknown

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

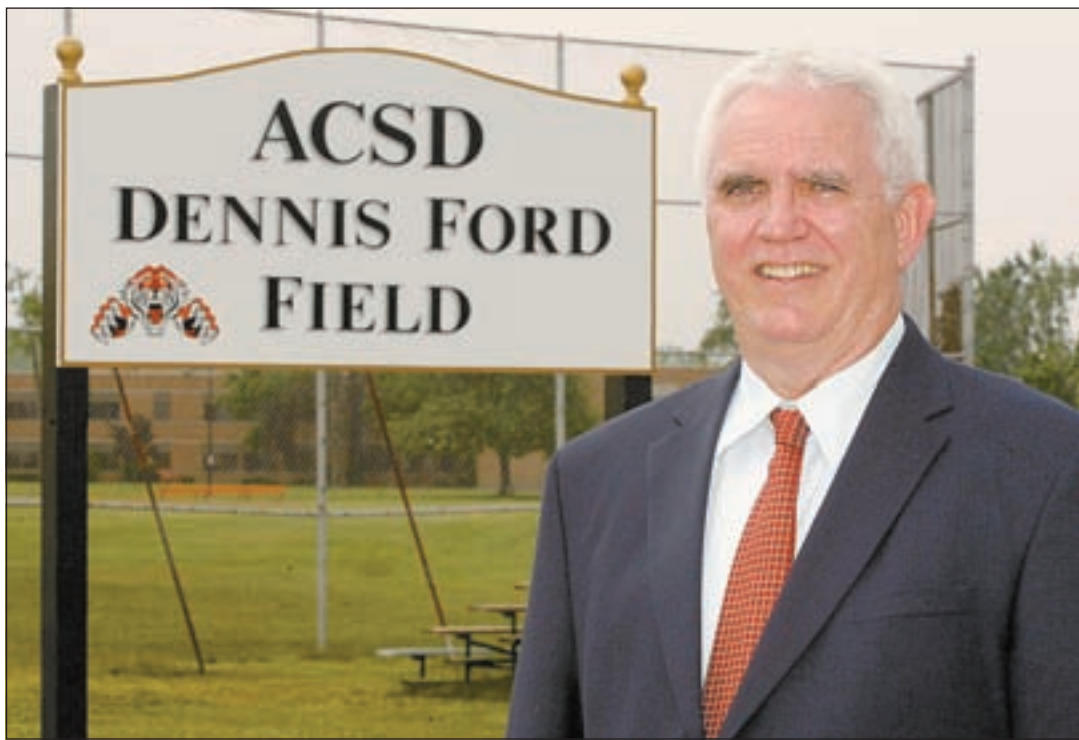
If there is any question what Superintendent Dennis Ford has meant to the Amherst Central School District, all you have to do is drive by the district's baseball field on Westmoreland Road and the softball field on Kings Highway. Located in front of each field by the sidewalk is a sign titled "ACSD Dennis Ford Field".

Ford is retiring after 11 years as Amherst superintendent effective June 30. Laura Chabe, current Westfield Academy and Central Schools' superintendent for the past four years, will start as Amherst's new superintendent on July 1.

Ford's retirement concludes a 34-year career in education that had stops in the Maine-Endwell (superintendent, four years), Elmira (associate superintendent, three years), and Newark (principal of middle school, four years, assistant principal, three years, acting assistant superintendent, one year,) Central School districts. He also taught secondary English at all levels in Newark for eight years.

Ford's retirement comes as no surprise. The Buffalo resident announced his retirement to

(Please turn to page 12)



Dennis Ford will retire on June 30 as superintendent of the Amherst Central School

District. His 34-year career in education began in Newark, N.Y.

Photo by Joe Eberle
Purchase color photos at www.BeeNews.com

Police say bike path rapist case never went cold

by JESSICA L. FINCH
Associate Editor

For seven hours Amherst police were face to face with a man they had been hunting for more than 20 years.

Altemio Sanchez was in custody, the man believed to be the infamous bike path rapist. The man who murdered three women and who police have linked to at least 10 rapes.

He has since pleaded guilty to three murders. Unsolved rape cases are still being investigated by police to determine if he is connected.

But it has been since the first reported rape on one of the town's bike paths that Amherst police have been searching for the guilty party.

Amherst police members say the bike path rapist case never went cold in their office. It resurfaced in the public's eye with the murder of Joan Diver in September 2006. Involving the FBI, State Police, Erie County Sheriffs and Buffalo Police Department, the investigation heated up when DNA from the Diver case was connected to the murders of former University at Buffalo student Linda S. Yalem in 1990 and May

“It appeared to me that he had 20 years to prepare for the interrogation.”

— Detective Ted DiNoto, Amherst police department

Jane Mazur, who was found on Exchange Street in November 1992.

It was then known that the bike path rapist had struck 20 years

after the last known murder. Mrs. Diver's death resulted in the formation of a task force for the bike path rapist case, which used the Amherst Police Department as its headquarters. But who was the man many called a monster?

It was the DNA recovered by Amherst police that was used in the case against Sanchez.

The bike path rapist case from the 1980s was not the same case when Sanchez was arrested. New technology allowed departments to test DNA faster, eliminating suspects who did not match DNA from the murder sites. Advances

(Please turn to page 16)

Amherst hockey's favorite son

Marchant first product of town program to win Stanley Cup

by DAVID F. SHERMAN
Managing Editor

Used pair of kid's hockey skates: \$40.

A wooden stick and some tape: \$25.

Watching your son skate around with the Stanley Cup: priceless.

That has been life experience of the Marchant family of East Amherst, as they realized a precious dream June 6.

(See related story on page 22.)

Peter and Sue Marchant were in the Honda Center in Anaheim that night when their son, Todd, and the Anaheim Ducks drubbed the Ottawa Senators 6-2 to capture the Cup in five games.

Todd Marchant is the first product of the Amherst Hockey Association to reach hockey's unreachable star.

A graduate of Mill Middle School and Williamsville East High School, he was named to the Williamsville Education Foundation's Wall of Fame in 2003.

Marchant played 10 years for the Amherst

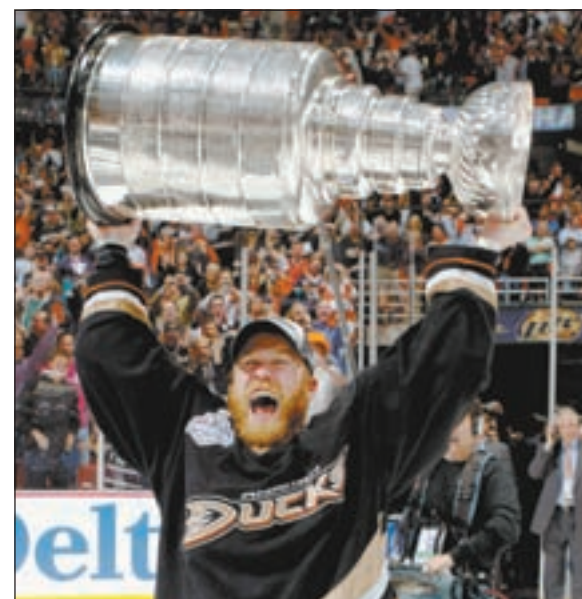
Hockey Association and had great success on its powerhouse travel teams. He made his NHL debut in 1994 with the Edmonton Oilers, where he played for 10 years. After one season in Columbus playing for the Blue Jackets, he joined the Ducks in 2005.

Each summer for the past eight years, he has run a hockey skills development camp at the Amherst Pepsi Center. This year's program runs from July 23-28.

He and others associated with the camp have donated more than \$46,000 to local charities "to help kids less fortunate achieve their goals," he states on the camp's Web site.

"The second and equally important reason that I started this hockey school was to try to give something back to this community. It is my hope that with your help . . . we can continue to help make their dreams come true."

The man who runs the camp is proof positive that dreams really do come true.



Todd Marchant hoists the Stanley Cup overhead after his Anaheim Ducks defeated the Ottawa Senators on June 6 to win the best of seven series.

Photo by Dave Sandford, Courtesy Getty Images