

Neighbors

ONONDAGA COUNTY EAST



EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS at Tully Junior-Senior High School participate in a recycle project as they go from classroom to classroom gathering papers and plastic bottles from the blue bins. Taking part are (from left) Dustin Draper (in doorway), Morgan Verrillo, Allison Kerr, Grace Brill and Ashley Evans. David Lassman / The Post-Standard

Community Conservation

Residents of Tully learn ways to 'live green'

TULLY GOES GREEN

By Dyana Smolen
Contributing writer

Last October, Tully residents got a primer on climate change courtesy of their neighbor, WSYR-TV (Channel 9) meteorologist Dave Eichorn.

After the presentation, Tully resident and IBM employee Melissa O'Mara had an idea and shared it with Tully Central School District Superintendent Craig Pritts.

"I said I really think people need a little bit more," O'Mara said. "We need to provide them with hope that there are good things already happening, locally and more broadly in the world."

That conversation sparked an idea for a follow-up, one that offered attendees real examples of how to engage in environmental conservation.

The result is "Growing Tully Green: The next steps to protecting our environment," a panel discussion that brings together representatives from local industry, government, education and local youth to discuss how people and organizations can have a positive impact on the environment.

"The data that Dave Eichorn presented last October was hard to argue, quite frankly," Pritts said. "Data is data. He wasn't sensationalizing. He was presenting facts. We've just decided to demonstrate to people what's going on and things that they can do."

Prior to the panel discussion, which will be held at Tully Junior-Senior High School, local students, businesses and organizations will erect displays that convey "greener work practices and lifestyles."

The displays can be viewed before and after the April 23 panel discussion, which takes place inside the school auditorium at 7 p.m. and will be moderated by Eichorn.

Jillian Kublick, a senior at Tully High School, was asked by Pritts to participate in the Growing Tully Green panel.

Making a positive impact on the environment is nothing new to Kublick, who last year initiated

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David Lassman / Staff photographer

TWELFTH-GRADER Amanda Watkins and 11th-grader Samantha Edinger drill holes in a section of the windmill tail assembly as part of an environmental science class last week at Tully Junior-Senior High School.

If you go ...

What: "Growing Tully Green: The next steps to protecting our environment"

When: April 23. Displays open for review at 6 p.m.; panel discussion begins at 7 p.m.

Where: Tully Junior/Senior High School Auditorium, 5848 Route 80, Tully

Cost: Free

To learn more: Call 696-6204. or go to <http://growtullygreen.blogspot.com>

Details: This panel discussion and informational event is intended to offer attendees real ways to engage in environmental conservation and "live green."

Informational displays open at 6 p.m. and the panel discussion, moderated by Channel 9 Meteorologist Dave Eichorn begins at 7 p.m.

Town hopes environmental panel will inspire change



TYLER CONANT (left) and Morgan Foster, both 12th-graders at Tully Junior-Senior High School, work on a windmill in environmental science class.

David Lassman / Staff photographer

Schools, businesses, community join Tully environmental effort

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ed a recycling program at the high school.

"Last year, I had brought up the issue of recycling at our school to Mr. Pritts and (high school principal) Mr. (Peter) Cardamone," Kublick said. "Now each room in the high school has two recycling bins, one for paper and one for plastic and the junior high environmental club picks them up everyday."

Kublick said she was inspired to do something because she was hearing a lot about global warming in the news and in her classes.

"In one of our economics classes, I learned that plastic bottles weren't being properly recycled and were building up in landfills," she said. "I got a few friends together and talked with Mr. Pritts and Mr. Cardamone."

Kublick's recycling ideas led to the creation of a high school environmental club. This year members have been planting trees and have begun constructing windmills. Approximately five feet in height, the

windmills will be installed on school grounds and, Kublick hopes, will save energy.

"It's a really good opportunity for our students," she said. "By building these windmills it shows our generation can make changes for the future. It's something you see. It's tangible. We can really feel like we're making a difference."

It's this kind of environmental innovation and action that IBM's O'Mara wants to see more of in the Tully community. She said she especially wants to see individuals encourage their employers to jump on the green bandwagon.

"My personal goal is that they'll consider ways to make a difference in their work, not just in their home," O'Mara said. "We can have an even bigger impact if we look at our business' carbon footprint. Corporations can make a difference."

O'Mara wants people — individuals and business leaders alike — to come away from the forum knowing they can be part of the global warming solution.

"The debate on whether or not humans are causing climate

change is largely over," she said. "Now is the time to get off the sidelines and find a place on the playing field. We all have a role to play, and there is much we can do now, no matter where we live, work, or shop."

Growing Tully Green marks the fourth forum sponsored by the school district in the 2½ years Pritts has been superintendent. Previous forums have focused on school security, the sex offender registry, and climate change.

"We don't create forums just to create them," Pritts said. "Whenever issues come up we address them. I think in a community this size, people look to the school, as well as the municipality, for leadership."

The main goal of any of the district's forums, including the upcoming panel discussion, he said, is to educate.

"We're not here to make money from this. We're not selling anything," Pritts said. "We're here to give people ideas and educate them. I believe this community has grasped onto this concept and we have a responsibility to educate and share and inform."