

## Making History

## Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary is where learning takes flight

BY DAVID LISCIO

Ann Witzig is convinced that the Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary adjacent to the Wheelabrator Saugus waste-to-energy plant in Saugus is key to the regional flight path taken by migratory birds.

"It has become an important stopover," said Witzig, who teaches advanced-placement environmental and marine sciences at the Essex Agricultural High School in Danvers. "Just having the sanctuary there is improving species diversity. We've already heard from the Audubon Society, which does counts at least twice a year, that many species are up in numbers."



Environmental science teacher Ann Witzig conducts a lesson.

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A production crew shot footage at Wheelabrator Saugus for a History Channel show on waste-to-energy. From left, Juan Rodriguez, Brendan Lattrell, Jason Longo and Bill Lattanzi. PHOTO: MEAGHAN CASEY

## Wheelabrator Saugus set to star in TV series

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

On a damp and misty day in October, the grounds of Wheelabrator Saugus teemed with crew members from a local production company, shooting footage of the plant and taking an in-depth look at the waste-to-energy process.

The filming was for a cable television

series. Powderhouse Productions, based in Somerville, was preparing a 10-minute pilot to present for a new show, "The Works," to appear on the History Channel.

If Powderhouse's concept airs, the Saugus plant is hoping to make a little history of its own.

The facility would be predominantly

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Pre-Sort Standard  
US POSTAGE  
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# Learning never stops at Wheelabrator



**JOHN O'ROURKE**

Although many people may not realize it, education plays a key role in what we do at Wheelabrator Saugus.

It is important for us to continually educate members of the community, especially students, on what happens to the trash that is placed on the curb in the morning and gone at night. It benefits you and us when we can reinforce the fact that waste-to-energy is a clean, efficient and environmentally responsible process that results in renewable energy.

We are proud that our facility – the plant and the adjacent Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary – serves as a classroom of sorts for students from elementary school to college. In this edition of Wheelabrator Saugus

“ It benefits you and us when we can reinforce that waste-to-energy is a clean, efficient and environmentally responsible process that results in renewable energy. ”

News, you will read about high school students who use our wildlife sanctuary as a place to study environmental science and college students who toured the plant to explore the relationship between

product consumption and trash generation.

In keeping with the theme of the importance of education, we are pleased to have provided new SMART Boards for the Oaklandvale School, thanks to the generosity of the Waste Management Charitable Foundation. Thanks to Waste Management, our parent company, Oaklandvale students are equipped with one of the key tools of 21st century learning.

All of us at Wheelabrator Saugus wish you and yours an enjoyable and safe holiday season.

*John O'Rourke is plant manager of Wheelabrator Saugus.*

## All in a hard day's work at Wheelabrator Saugus

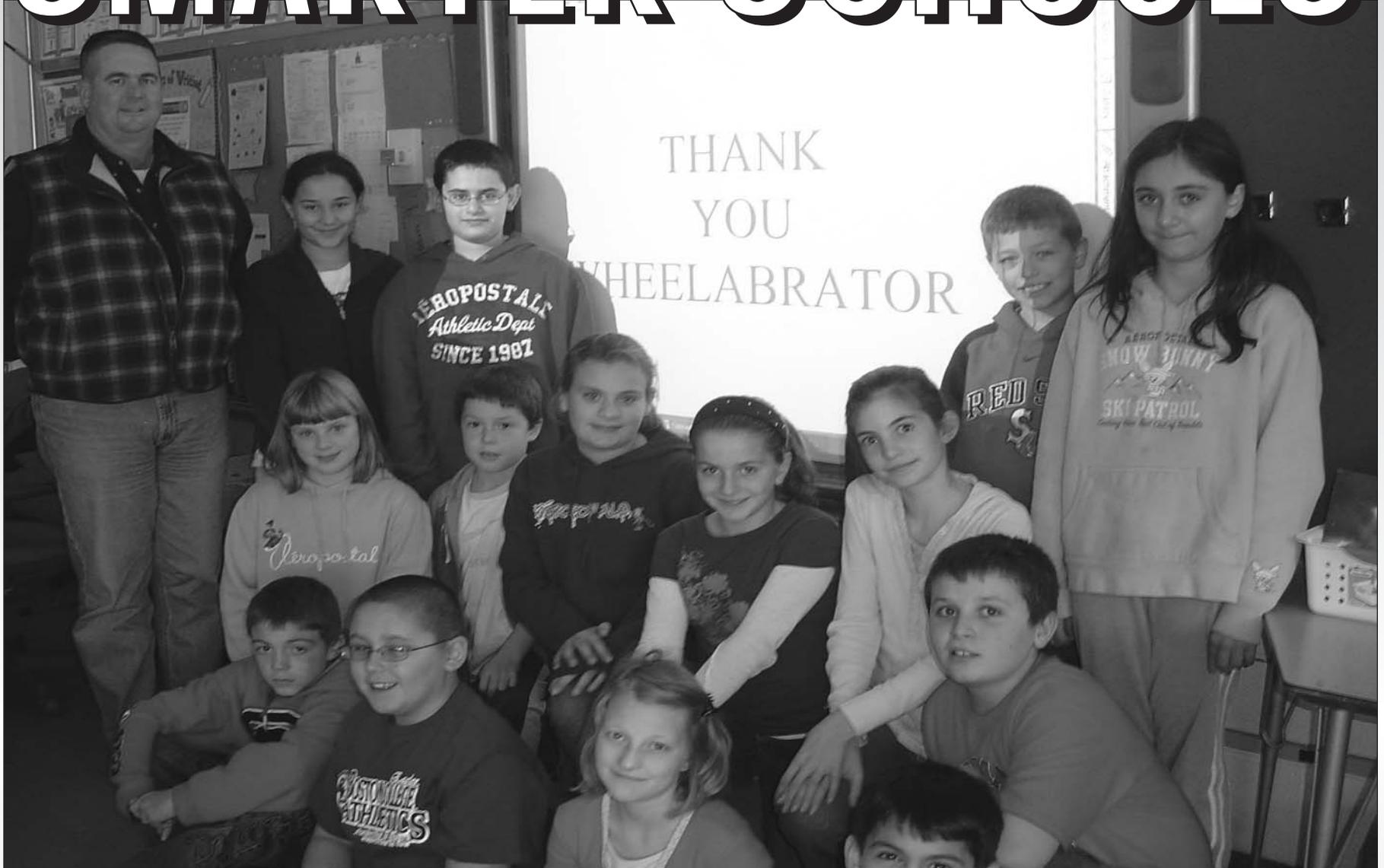


First-class mechanic Agostinho Moreira concentrates on the job at Wheelabrator Saugus. Moreira has been working at the plant since 1976.

### Wheelabrator Saugus Quick Facts

Operating since 1975, Wheelabrator Saugus is the United States' first commercially successful waste-to-energy facility. The plant processes up to 1500 tons per day of municipal solid waste from communities on the North Shore of Massachusetts.

# SMARTER SCHOOLS



Wheelabrator Saugus Plant Manager John O'Rourke, left, visited Carol D'Angelo's fifth-grade class at the Oaklandvale School to look at the SMART Boards.



Third-graders Alyssa Filappone, left, and Chris McGrane post a thank-you message (center photo) to Wheelabrator.

## Waste Management, Wheelabrator bring new technology to Oaklandvale

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Students at the Oaklandvale Elementary School are saying thanks a thousand — times nine.

The students received a \$9,000-boost in technology thanks to a grant from the Waste Management Charitable Foundation. Linda Sapienza, Saugus Business Education Collaborative board member and director of community relations for Wheelabrator Technologies, Inc. secured the grant for the school.

"We're so grateful for Wheelabrator's support," said Oaklandvale Principal Kathy Stanton. "They've always been good to us and the students of Saugus."

The grant money was used to upgrade technology at the Oaklandvale School, supplying classrooms with computers and SMART Boards, which are touch-sensitive interactive white boards. Teachers and students can write on the boards with electronic pens and can navigate Web sites or documents with the touch of a finger.

"It's such an amazing tool for teaching and learning," said Stanton.

"It's so impressive to see what kids can do with

technology today," said Wheelabrator Saugus Plant Manager John O'Rourke, who visited Oaklandvale classrooms in November to check out the new technology. "These students are the future engineers, teachers and business people in our communities. It's our job to do anything we can to help supply them with the tools they need to succeed."

The Waste Management Charitable Foundation was established by Waste Management, Inc. to support public charities throughout the U.S., focusing specifically on towns and communities where its facilities are located. Waste Management — Wheelabrator's parent company — is the leading provider of comprehensive waste and environmental services in North America. Based in Houston, the company serves municipal, commercial, industrial and residential customers throughout North America.

In 2006, Wheelabrator secured a foundation grant that was used to supply every classroom at the Waybright Elementary School with new iMac computers and Internet wiring. The funds were also used to integrate Study Island, a Web-based MCAS preparation program, in the school.



# Production crew films at Wheelabrator for TV series

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featured in an episode entitled, “Where Your Garbage Goes.”

“We came up with a list of 50 topics and we decided on trash was it because it’s visual,” said Powderhouse Creative Director Bill Lattanzi. “It’s something everyone thinks about, but they don’t really understand.”

Lattanzi and his crew focused on the behind-the-scenes process of waste removal and renewal.

“We wanted to show the whole cycle, cradle to cradle — what you don’t see after you throw something away,” he said. “We started out with curbside collection and then followed where it goes when it’s recycled and turned into energy. When you think about it, something that’s thrown out is really only at its mid-life. Like reincarnation, it continues on, coming back as something else. It’s interesting stuff.”

The pilot was narrated by Daniel Wilson, a 29-year-old resident of Portland, Ore. Wilson is a writer and robotics engineer and a contributing editor to Popular Mechanics magazine.

“Our main goal, initially, was to sell the concept and sell Daniel to the network,” said producer Thomas Draudt.

Powderhouse worked closely with Waste Management, Inc. — the parent company of Wheelabrator, based in Houston, Texas — to select the locations to film.

“We were told the Saugus plant was the best one in terms of proximity and scale,” said Draudt.

Drawing on its 32 years in the business and its role as the first Wheelabrator plant to open, the Saugus facility seemed like the natural choice. Once there, the crew filmed the exterior of the plant, the tipping floor and the charging deck, giving viewers an inside look at the business.

“It’s actually a highly technical, skilled job and process,” said Lattanzi. “I don’t think a lot of people realize what exactly goes into it.”

In addition to Wheelabrator Saugus, the crew visited Turnkey Recycling & Environmental Enterprises in Rochester, NH, which is also owned by Waste Management. The Turnkey facility services the disposal, recycling and re-use needs of customers throughout New England.

“Besides doing their job, and doing it well, Wheelabrator Saugus and Turnkey are doing good things in the community and the environment,” said Liz Johnson, Waste Management communications manager, who was present for the filming.

For their last stop, the crew toured Daneyh Park in Cambridge, which was built on top of a former landfill.

Powderhouse is a regular contributor to the Discovery Channel, the History Channel, TLC, National Geographic Channel, WGBH and NOVA. The company is currently in negotiations with the History Channel to move forward with the show, which is likely to air in March.

“We may be back at Wheelabrator for more, sooner rather than later,” said Lattanzi.



A production crew shot footage inside the Wheelabrator Saugus plant for use in an upcoming show on the History Channel.



# Learning takes flight at bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary



Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary served as a classroom of sorts for AP environmental science students from Essex Aggie High School.

## ESSEX AGGIE: from Page 1

Witzig’s students have been to the 250-acre Saugus site, where fox-tailed phragmites sway in the sea breeze, sharing space with marsh grasses that cover the landfill. Some of her students were born and raised in Saugus, no more than a mile or two from the sanctuary, but were unaware of its ecological significance.

“There are hawks and snowy owls on the reserve,” said Witzig, noting that the owls often live along the runways at Logan International Airport in East Boston. “The meadow larks are nesting. The bobolinks are nesting. Birds that were classified as endangered are starting to show up in the area.”

The wildlife sanctuary is located along Route 107 in Saugus, adjacent to the waste-to-energy facility. “It’s the perfect stopover,” Witzig said. “It provides habitat, so the birds go from Logan Airport to the Saugus sanctuary to the barrier communities like Nahant and Plum Island. It’s part of the chain.”

Witzig, who holds a master’s degree in marine science from the University of Maryland, began teaching at Essex Aggie

five years ago. In that time, she has nurtured her students’ passion for the environment by bringing them out into it, whether it be a field trip to the Saugus sanctuary or a walk through the hills surrounding the school.

By partnering with Wheelabrator Saugus, the agricultural school students can utilize the wildlife sanctuary as an outdoor laboratory, conducting field tests, taking soil samples, and conducting counts of birds and other species. The sanctuary features a classroom building near its entrance.

“It’s really cool,” said Witzig. “Our role is to educate the community as well as the students to the value of the sanctuary. We want to teach our students environmental science but we also want to make them better citizens.”

Lee McMillan, who teaches geology at the school, has been conducting soil tests at the sanctuary, bringing those results back to the classroom. “We did some surface soil analysis this year, looking at things like PH and other factors,” she said. “It’s great to be able to do field work with the students.”

# WHEELABRATOR: SANCTUARY FOR WILDLIFE



Formerly a landfill, Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary has become a haven for migratory birds and other wildlife. Wheelabrator Saugus created the sanctuary in 1998 and has spent more than \$2

million restoring the area. Northeast Wetlands Restoration has planted more than 17,000 trees and developed nine coastal ecosystems to attract nearly 200 different types of birds.

Employee  
Profile

# Right at home

## New employee from Saugus fits right in at Wheelabrator

By DAVID LISCIO

When the big trucks rumble toward the scale house laden with trash, James Catizone meets them with a smile from his perch inside the scale house at the Wheelabrator Saugus waste-to-energy plant.

“I love it,” he says, multi-tasking as the truck drivers ask questions and present documentation, all the while keeping an eye on the scales, radiation detectors and other detection equipment inside the glass-windowed booth. “Right now, I’m actually being trained by Steve Braga. I’m learning from the weigh master himself.”

Catizone, 42, is new to Wheelabrator Saugus, so he’s taking on several diverse responsibilities at the plant, including scale house operator trainee, warehouse duties, some administrative tasks, and even a few hours at the reception desk.

“The more different things I learn, the better, as far as I’m concerned,” he said. “This is a great company. It’s well run and the employees are happy.”

Born and raised in South Boston, Catizone lives in Saugus with his

wife, Sandee, and 22-year-old son, Paul. He said he didn’t know the waste-to-energy plant along Route 107 existed until he started looking for a new job. He spent 10 years at Intel until that company implemented a dramatic reduction in its labor force. He then worked two years with Liberty Mutual Insurance Co., scheduling its corporate jets.

“We could get a call and within three hours have a jet ready to go for one of the company executives,” he said. “It was impressive.”

Catizone joined Wheelabrator two months ago.

“It’s amazing that you could drive by this place

and never even notice the wildlife sanctuary next door,” he said. “Most people don’t think about what goes on here. But now that I’m working the scale house, I see how much energy each truck brings in.”

The “energy” is actually trash, weighed by the ton. The waste is burned and the resulting heat is used to create steam that powers a turbine which produces electricity. In most instances, the gross registered weight of the truck, when empty, is already entered in the scale house computer, so it doesn’t take a lot of computation time to figure out just how much trash is inbound.

He may have only been at Wheelabrator for a few months, but James Catizone seems to have found a home in his hometown.



James Catizone joined the Wheelabrator staff two months ago. PHOTOS: DAVID LISCIO