



Wheelabrator SAUGUS News

Vol. 6, No. 1

A PUBLICATION OF WHEELABRATOR TECHNOLOGIES INC.

Summer 2009



A truck unloads at Wheelabrator Saugus.

Saugus Save\$

New deal could net
community \$350,000

BY PAUL HALLORAN

Wheelabrator Saugus has signed a new trash disposal contract with the Town of Saugus that could save the town as much as \$350,000 over the life of the five-year deal.

The town will pay \$71 per ton for disposal, nine percent less than the \$78.06 called for in the old contract, which was due to expire Dec. 31. Saugus annually sends 9,000-10,000 tons of trash to Wheelabrator. At that rate, the town will save between \$63,500 and \$70,500 per year for the next five years.

"This was a long, hard negotiation that resulted in a contract beneficial to both sides," said Town Manager Andrew Bisignani. "There is a savings to the town, and, in times of fiscal

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Wheelabrator Saugus Plant Manager John O'Rourke, far left, conducts a tour for, from left, Saugus High seniors Elizabeth Shaw, Sylvanna Gena, and Tom Difraia and Saugus Solid Waste/Recycling Coordinator Lorna Cerbone and Director of Public Health Frank Giacalone during the town's annual Shadow Day. Story, Pages 4-5. PHOTO: REBA SALDANHA

Singing praises of 'Unsung Heroes'

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Nine Saugus students were honored by the Saugus Business Education Collaborative (SBEC) at the fifth annual Unsung Heroes award ceremony at Prince Restaurant.

The students were recognized for their academic efforts and contributions to their school community. To qualify for the award, students must have shown consistent/persistent academic effort, exemplary

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Brittany Buckley, with her mother, Julie, was one of nine Saugus students to receive the Unsung Hero Award from the SBEC.

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Wheelabrator SAUGUS News

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Lines of communication are open



JOHN O'ROURKE

The purpose of *Wheelabrator Saugus News* is to give the Saugus community an inside look at who we are and what we do at our plant. We firmly believe we have a good story to tell, and this publication is an important means for us to communicate with you.

Along those lines, you will read elsewhere on this page about a new outdial system we have implemented in partnership with the Saugus Board of Health. The purpose of the message system is to allow us to quickly and efficiently communicate directly with those who live in close proximity to the plant.

I am grateful for the help and cooperation of Frank Giacalone, Saugus' director of public health, in seeing this idea through to fruition. The Board of Health worked with us on this idea from the beginning, and helped us compile the list of residents who receive

the recorded messages.

The outdial system ensures our neighbors will be kept apprised of events warranting their attention. It is our intention to include as much information as possible in the message, including what is being done to address the particular issue and an estimated timeframe for the resolution.

We used the system for the first time on March 31 when a computer malfunction led to the release of high-pressure steam, resulting in a loud noise for about 15 minutes. Fortunately, all the procedures we have in place worked and our employees handled the situation in the manner they have been trained.

Nonetheless, we felt it important to implement the outdial system to let people know what happened and reassure them no one was in any danger.

There are other stories in this edition

highlighting the commitment Wheelabrator Saugus has to the community, including our sponsorship of drug-prevention efforts in the schools and our participation in Shadow Day, in which Saugus High students spend a day at the plant working to get an understanding of our operations. This is an annual event we always look forward to.

I understand effective communication is a two-way street, so if you ever have any questions about anything concerning the plant, please do not hesitate to contact me either by e-mail (jorourke@wm.com) or phone (781-233-7600).

Enjoy the spring.

John O'Rourke is plant manager at Wheelabrator Saugus.

Company and community keep connected

BY PAUL HALLORAN

Wheelabrator Saugus and the Saugus Board of Health have instituted a program designed to enhance communication between the plant and its neighbors.

In the event anything occurs at the plant that could raise questions or concerns among residents, a recorded voice message will go out by telephone to residents who live in the surrounding precincts. Messages will be sent between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.

"We want to be proactive in keeping the community, especially those who live closest to the plant, informed in the event of any unusual activity," said John O'Rourke, plant manager. "This is a joint effort of Wheelabrator and the Board of Health that improves communication between us and the community."

The outdial system was utilized on March 31 when a computer malfunction caused high-pressure steam to be released, resulting in loud noises for about 15 minutes. The incident happened at about 1:30 p.m., and within three hours a recorded message had gone out to approximately 1,200 residents explaining what happened and assuring them that there was no risk to the safety of

the public or Wheelabrator employees.

"When pressurized steam is released into the atmosphere, the rapid expansion of gases causes the noise," O'Rourke said. "Our staff reacted as trained and quickly resolved the situation."

"The safety release valve did exactly what it's supposed to do, which is a very good thing," said Saugus Fire Chief James Blanchard, whose department received calls

from concerned residents when the incident occurred.

The outdial system was implemented partly in response to an incident last summer in which the venting of steam resulted in loud noises, prompting several neighbors to express concern.

Silencers have been installed designed to muffle the noise produced when steam is vented through the roof of the plant. The silencers are a

series of baffles activated when steam being vented through the roof passes through them. Acting like mufflers, they absorb the noise before it gets into the air.

"We take our commitment to being a good neighbor seriously, and we apologize for any inconvenience we may have caused," O'Rourke said.



We want to be proactive in keeping the community, especially those who live closest to the plant, informed in the event of any unusual activity.

John O'Rourke
Plant Manager



View of the Saugus plant from Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary.

Answering the call

Wheelabrator funds important youth programs

When Saugus Speaks Out needed a sponsor to fund its Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), and when the town lost state funding for an important drug-prevention program at Belmonte Middle School, it turned to Wheelabrator Saugus. The company was happy to oblige and agreed to fund the programs for the 2009-10 school year.

"When we were asked for help with these two programs, we jumped at the opportunity," said Plant Manager John O'Rourke. "Over the years we have awarded grants and donated funding to support many programs for students in the Saugus schools. Preventing drug use and other behavior that puts youth at risk is obviously a priority for all of us."

An active member of the Saugus Business Education Collaborative (SBEC) and supporter of Saugus Speaks Out, Wheelabrator Saugus donated \$5,900 to fund this year's YRBS.

"I would like to recognize the efforts of Co-Chair Ellen Faiella and other members of Saugus Speaks Out, Community Health Task

Force and Wheelabrator Plant Manager John O'Rourke for putting this together," said Greg Nickolas, director of youth and recreation for the town. "Wheelabrator's donation could not have come at a better time. We would not be able to administer the survey without it."

The YRBS was conducted among pre-teens and teens attending Belmonte Middle School and Saugus High School. Students were questioned about behaviors associated with the leading causes of illness, injury and death among young people. The information collected will help Saugus Public Schools improve health education programs. It will also assist the community in developing effective programs aimed at preventing and reducing health risk behaviors among youth.

Student participation was voluntary and anonymous; no names were collected, used or reported. The survey consisted of a series of multiple-choice questions concerning tobacco, alcohol and drug use; behaviors related to intentional and unintentional injuries; eating habits and physical activity;

and behaviors related to HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancy. Parents were able to review the survey at the schools prior to it being administered.

"This survey gives us a pretty accurate snapshot of the risk factors our Saugus youth are facing," Nickolas said. "It also reveals what protective factors are in place, or in most cases, need to be in place. My department is collaborating with the schools and other town departments and organizations to assist kids and families to make



From left, Chris Tarantino of the Saugus Youth and Recreation Dept., Ellen Faiella of Saugus Speaks Out and the Community Health Task Force, Belmonte Middle School teacher Kim Politano, Wheelabrator Saugus Plant Manager John O'Rourke, Fire Chief James Blanchard, Director of Emergency Management Paul Penachio, Town Manager Andrew Bisignani and Youth and Recreation Director Greg Nickolas.

healthy choices in life. The results of this survey will help guide us in our efforts."

The mission of Saugus Speaks Out is to bring awareness and resources to the community on how to help prevent, treat and decrease substance abuse. It is a diverse partnership of community members committed to proactively reducing substance abuse among Saugus youth.

A drug-prevention program was put in place at Belmonte Middle School this year by the Saugus Youth and Recreation Department and funded by a state grant. The town learned a few months ago the funding would not be renewed, so it was forced to seek alternative funding or eliminate the valuable program. Nickolas and Town Manager Andrew

Bisignani approached O'Rourke and asked for Wheelabrator's support. The company donated \$9,000 to fund the program.

"I see almost daily the adverse impact substance abuse has on our kids and adults," Nickolas said. "This generous donation will allow us to maintain a much needed general prevention program."

"Wheelabrator's donation will afford us the opportunity to maintain this very important program in a time of severe financial difficulty," Bisignani said.

The program at Belmonte is coordinated by teacher Kim Politano, while Saugus High teacher Michael Maruzzi is putting together a program for high school students to visit Belmonte and serve as mentors.



Wheelabrator Saugus Plant Manager John O'Rourke, back row center, presented a check to Saugus Speaks Out to fund the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Wheelabrator celebrates 100 years of business

Wheelabrator Technologies Inc., the U.S. pioneer for municipal waste-to-energy technology, is observing its 100th year of environmental achievement and innovation by looking forward to the next 100 years of continued excellence and leadership.

The company's accomplishments span a century of establishing global standards for design and efficiency in materials handling, industrial foundry and castings, dust control, worker safety, and environmental control.

"On behalf of our 100-year heritage of excellence and innovation, this celebration marks the beginning of an even more exciting future for Wheelabrator," said Mark A. Weidman, president. "We're deeply proud of the inventive, landmark environmental achievements of our predecessors and equally enthusiastic about the potential for even more

challenging leadership and innovation in the decades ahead."

Wheelabrator was founded in 1908 as Sand Mixing Machine Company, which, by 1910, had evolved into American Foundry Equipment Company, inventor of the American Dust Arrestor, an industrial fabric cleaning system for foundry operations. In 1932, the company introduced the airless centrifugal wheel for efficiently cleaning industrial surfaces.

Over the next two decades, through acquisitions and innovations, the company grew into an environmentally focused company. By



the early 1970s, Wheelabrator emerged as the founder of the U.S.-based waste-to-energy business when it opened the industry's first commercially successful facility in Saugus, Mass.

Today, wholly owned by the largest environmental service company in North America, Waste

Management, Wheelabrator is a recognized market leader in the

design, construction, and operation of waste-to-energy and independent power plants, with 21 facilities across North America. The company has recorded numerous industry firsts in providing reliable and safe waste disposal, clean energy, natural resource management and

protection, and air quality control.

Other Wheelabrator "firsts" include:

1975 — first commercially successful waste-to-energy facility

1979 — first commercial reuse/recycling project for waste-to-energy residue

1987 — first modern air quality control technology for large-scale, waste-to-energy

1994 — first waste-to-energy facility with integrated materials recovery/recycling and carbon injection control

According to Weidman, "The people who founded this company in 1908 and those who will lead it in the next century will have shared the same motivations — leading very talented people in developing better and better technologies for industry and the environment. We're extremely proud to be a part of this chain of past and future innovation."



Top, administrators from the Town of Saugus, from left, Fran Trainor; Frank Giacalone, and Lorna Cerbone check out the trash pit at the plant; above, Senior Tom Difraia gets a look at the inner workings of Wheelabrator Saugus during a tour; at left, student Elizabeth Shaw tests the heat from the burner.



Plant Manager John O'Rourke, right, gives a tour to, from left, Saugus Director of Public Health Frank Giacalone, Saugus High seniors Tom Difraia, Sylvanna Gena, and Elizabeth Shaw, and Fran Trainor, supervisor of administrative services for the Town of Saugus.



Marin Kalanzeri and David Vasapolli work with Wheelabrator Operations Manager Bill Hoen on Shadow Day.

A day in the life

Saugus students shadow Wheelabrator employees

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Sometimes, significant learning takes place outside of classroom walls. Saugus High School students quickly found that out during the annual Job Shadow Day, which allows seniors to see first-hand what a typical day is like in the careers of their chosen field.

At Wheelabrator Saugus, seniors Bret Reid and Caitlin Quinlan shadowed Plant Manager John O'Rourke; Marin Kalanzeri and David Vasapolli were with Operations Manager Bill Hoen; and Kerri Quinlan and John Woodward shadowed Bob Faia, director of environmental, health and safety.

The students toured the facility, visiting the control room and witnessing the process of converting trash into energy. O'Rourke talked to the students about the history of the waste-to-energy industry and showed them a video that explained the cycle, step-by-step. "I didn't know much about Wheelabrator coming into this," said Kerri Quinlan. "Driving by, I thought they just dealt with trash, not energy. It was different than I expected. Watching the video the second time around, after the tour, it made so much more sense."

"Some of them had no idea what they were getting into when they arrived, so the first thing we wanted to do was find out what their expectations were and educate them," said Faia. "It's kind of a unique industry right here in their hometown, so it's a good opportunity for them to visit the plant and see what we do."

With Faia, the students learned about continuous emissions monitoring, the state's waste bans and what Wheelabrator does to protect the environment and provide a safe workplace for its employees. The students also toured the landfill and Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, which was recently awarded the Wildlife Habitat Council's Wildlife-at-Work certification.

"There are tons of animals out there that you wouldn't expect — rare birds, fox, coyotes, deer," said Woodward. O'Rourke gave students a more in-depth look at the business of Wheelabrator, and Hoen reviewed the different engineering aspects of the plant's operations, going over construction plans and taking students to the plant's water lab.

"It was awesome; I had a blast," said Kalanzeri. The students also observed the plant's Safety on Purpose program, which challenges employees to continuously think of new ways to strengthen safety in the workplace. They watched as employees discussed their ideas and were rewarded for their contributions with a spin on the wheel of prizes, including gift certificates to local businesses.

All six of the students who visited Wheelabrator had expressed interest in the fields of engineering and/or business. "What I like about engineering is that there's a lot of teamwork," said Caitlin Quinlan. "You rely on others."

They agreed the experience gave them a very real taste of life in the workforce. "It's a good way to get a better feel of the different careers out," said Reid.

"At their age, seniors in high school, it's difficult to figure out what they want to get into or even what field of engineering they

“It's extremely educational [for students] to be able to experience different things and think outside the box.”
Bob Faia

want to pursue," said Faia. "It's extremely educational to be able to experience different things and think outside the box."

In addition to the students who spent the day at Wheelabrator, three other Saugus seniors visited the facility with Saugus Director of Public Health Frank Giacalone. O'Rourke provided that group with a tour and overview of the plant's operations. "It ties in with what I do with the Board of Health and shows the students what kind of relationship we have with Wheelabrator," said Giacalone, who also brought his students to the Holiday Inn to observe food and pool installation inspections.

This year's Job Shadow Day was held April 8. Throughout the day, the senior class visited a range of other public and private offices, including Town Manager Andrew Bisignani, Saugus' police and fire departments and various local businesses and organizations. The program is supported through the Saugus Business Education Collaborative.



Saugus students and town officials got an inside look at the Wheelabrator Saugus plant on Shadow Day.

New contract benefits Saugus

CONTRACT: from Page 1

uncertainty, it's nice to be able to budget for trash disposal for the next five years."

Wheelabrator Saugus Plant Manager John O'Rourke said the new contract reflects the market rate for disposal. "We worked with the town manager to set a fair price based on market rates," he said.

Bisignani said the stability of having a five-year deal in place is as important as the reduction in price. "We now have long-term contracts in place for the collection and disposal of trash allowing us to budget accordingly knowing what our costs will be."

Wheelabrator has been providing trash disposal for the town since the waste-to-energy facility opened in 1975. The company pays the town a host community fee of about \$2.5 million per year, which is approximately \$1 million more than it is obligated to pay under a formula set by the Commonwealth.



Nine students were honored as Unsung Heroes by the SBEC: front row, from left, Wheelabrator Saugus Plant Manager John O'Rourke, Matthew Derby, Brittany Buckley, Jack Pulicari, Alexander Singer; Superintendent of Schools Richard Langlois; back row, from left, School Committee member and SBEC President Christine Wilson, David Angelo, Nicolas Ruggiero, Fabiola Medrano, Evelyn D'Amato and Amanda McTague.

Singing the praises of 'Unsung Heroes'

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character, mature behavior, outgoing personality and good citizenship.

Wheelabrator Saugus, represented by Plant Manager John O'Rourke and Heidi Choate, SBEC board member and community relations specialist for

Wheelabrator Technologies, provided funding for the trophies and gift cards the students received.

This year's Unsung Hero award recipients are: David Angelo, Belmonte Middle School; Brittany Buckley, Veterans Memorial Elementary School; Evelyn D'Amato, Lynnhurst Elementary School;

Matthew Derby, Oaklandvale Elementary School; Amanda McTague, Saugus High School; Fabiola Medrano, Belmonte Middle School; Jack Pulicari, Veterans Memorial Elementary School; Nicolas Ruggiero, Waybright Elementary School; and Alexander Singer, Saugus High School.



New technology for Veterans Memorial

Wheelabrator Saugus presented a \$9,500 technology grant to Veterans Memorial Elementary School. The grant, awarded by the Waste Management Foundation through the Saugus Business Education Collaborative, was presented by Wheelabrator Saugus Plant Manager John O'Rourke, second from left, and Community Relations Specialist Heidi Choate, center. SBEC Vice Chairman John Smolinsky, left, Veterans Memorial Principal Uri Harel, second from right, and Saugus Superintendent of Schools Richard Langlois were also on hand for the presentation.

Saugus and beyond

Industry leader, honored by Columbia, got his start here

Arthur "Artie" Cole, vice president of technical services for Wheelabrator Technologies, has worked for more than three decades to invent and improve waste-to-energy systems, and his efforts have led to seven U.S. patents for improvements in refuse-combustion techniques and air-pollution control.

Because of his ingenuity, Cole, who started his career at Wheelabrator Saugus 32 years ago, was honored by the Waste-To-Energy Research & Technology (WTER) Council at Columbia University with its 2008 Outstanding Industry Contributor Award.

"My job is to go around the plants constantly looking at the issues causing problems and determine where we can make improvements and design new systems," said Cole, who works at Wheelabrator's headquarters in Hampton, N.H., and provides his engineering expertise to both Wheelabrator and its parent company, Waste Management. "I've always liked to make things work better."

Affectionately known to friends and colleagues as "the pig farmer," a reference to his work as a youth on the North Shore at his family's hog farm, Cole's educational background is centered in animal science and agricultural engineering. Cole attended North Shore Community College after graduating in 1973 from Essex Agricultural and Technical Institute in Danvers.



The technology has evolved and we're constantly designing new systems, and improving old patents, to keep up with the technology. This is a very regulated industry and we provide the purest form of recycling

Artie Cole
Wheelabrator Vice President

"That's where I developed my mechanical aptitude and passion for fixing things," Cole said. "There's a lot of mechanics and engineering involved in agriculture."

A Peabody native, Cole recalls working as a youth collecting food waste from swill buckets, something most homeowners at the time had on their property. "We'd collect the swill to feed to the hogs, so I've really worked in waste-to-energy for my entire life," he said.

Cole went to work at Wheelabrator

Saugus in 1977 as a first class mechanic. Eleven years later he was promoted to New England regional manager for maintenance. In 1993 he was named director of plant engineering, then vice president of plant engineering in 1998; vice president of maintenance and plant services in 2001; and vice president of technical services in 2007.

"I'm always traveling, visiting all of the plants," Cole said. "The technology has evolved and we're constantly designing new systems, and improving old patents, to keep

up with the technology. This is a very regulated industry and we provide the purest form of recycling."

Among Cole's inventions for which he was honored by WTER are:

- ◆ a slide plate guide that eliminated the need for roller bearings that would quickly wear out;
- ◆ expansion joints made from high temperature fiber rope that is placed around ceramic tiles protecting the waste-to-energy combustion chamber;
- ◆ shields that protect waste-to-energy boiler tubes from erosion and corrosion;
- ◆ a replaceable boiler roof segment that does not require the entire grate to be removed; and
- ◆ durable spray nozzles for air-pollution control.

"There's a lot more to these plants than most people imagine," Cole said. "When the public is made aware of that, their comfort level (toward the plants) goes way up."

Nickolas J. Themelis, director of the Earth Engineering Center of Columbia University, said of the 2008 award recipients, "It is a common saying that certain people make all the difference in this world. This is true for the individuals (honored in 2008). Through their life's work, they have contributed much to the global advancement of thermal treatment technologies and the attendant environmental and resource conservation benefits."

Unusual visitors flock to Wheelabrator Saugus

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Some unusual visitors flocked to the grounds of Wheelabrator Saugus in March.

A flight of 17 Greater White-Fronted Geese landed in Wheelabrator's Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, a 200-acre landfill that is actively managed to serve as a haven for migratory birds and other wildlife.

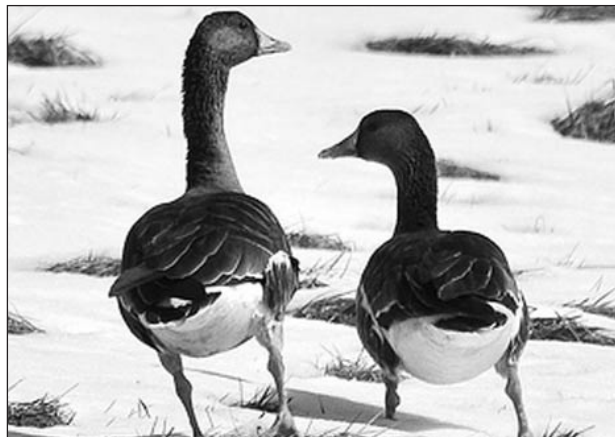
Peter Young, professor of urban and community forestry at North Shore Community College, regularly leads bird enthusiasts through the area. On March 8, he was leading a tour of Massachusetts Audubon members when the group noticed the geese.

"No sooner had they landed about 70 yards away when one of the members whispered, 'They're Greenland White-Fronted Geese,'" said Young. "We watched and photographed them for quite a while. We knew this was hot news, so we invited a team of scientists with a powerful camera to get better photographs for documentation."

The sighting was so rare because the White-Fronted Goose generally breeds in west Greenland, and migrates via Iceland to Ireland and England for the winters. It can also be found nesting in northern Russia, Arctic Canada and Alaska.

Upon further investigation on March 10, the observers noticed there appeared to be different subspecies involved.

"At this point we realized we had an important ornithological discovery here," said Young. "Two or three White-Fronted Geese had been seen on the Atlantic coast of North America



Two Greater White-Fronted Geese enjoy the Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary at Wheelabrator Saugus.

before, but not recently and not in these numbers."

On March 12, two scientists – one from Cornell University's ornithological lab and another from Harvard University – arrived to document the geese. They were able to come within 40 feet of the geese to capture the photos they needed for identification.

Upon examination of the pictures in the lab, the scientists discovered the 17 geese were actually a barren grounds subspecies of the White-Fronted, some of whom were immature and marked differently. These geese are significantly rarer on the Atlantic coast than the Greenland subspecies, according to

Young. The barren grounds subspecies flies north to the barrens along a route called the Central Flyway, while the Greenland subspecies flies the Atlantic Flyway.

The geese remained in Saugus until March 17, and Young was able to run another tour for 25 bird watchers before their departure.

"We indeed provided a loafing site for some very rare visitors," said Young. "Why they came to Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary is still unknown."

Wheelabrator created the Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary in 1998 and has spent more than \$2 million in restoring capped areas of the landfill with native grasslands and implementing methods to prevent the growth of invasive plants. Geoff Wilson of Northeast Wetlands Restoration, a former student of Young, oversaw the project, planting 17,000 trees in the first year and developing nine coastal ecosystems to attract nearly 200 different types of birds, including 24 species labeled as endangered or threatened. The site recently received a certification from the Wildlife Habitat Council for its land management practices and educational outreach programs.

"It's an upland island of several different grasslands surrounded by various maritime brush lands and emerging forest habitats," said Young. "It's nestled in the estuary and seems to be a magnet to those species of birds attracted genetically to this type of place. Unfortunately, such natural habitats no longer exist for many of these birds, so Bear Creek seems to act like a beacon attracting birds that have evolved to favor such habitats. It is, indeed, a treasure."

Welcome addition



Wheelabrator Community Relations Specialist Heidi Choate is happy to serve on the SBEC board.

Choate pleased to serve on SBEC board

By MEAGHAN CASEY

New Hampshire native Heidi Choate is feeling right at home in her new Saugus surroundings, where she has taken on an active role in the community.

Choate, who serves as community relations specialist for Wheelabrator Technologies, recently joined the board of the Saugus Business Education Collaborative (SBEC). She replaced long-term board member Linda Sapienza, director of community relations for Wheelabrator.

"I had big shoes to fill, following Linda, but becoming involved in SBEC has been great," said Choate. "I've enjoyed meeting the people in Saugus and getting to know them. Interacting with the kids and teachers really makes the job fun."

Choate plays a direct role in SBEC programs such as Wheelabrator Saugus' Adopt-a-School partnership with the Waybright School, funding and participating in its literacy programs, field days and other enrichment activities. She also helps coordinate the public relations for the SBEC publications.

Since its founding in 1992, the SBEC has raised more than \$250,000 for Saugus Public Schools. Comprised of

local businesspeople, government officials and school employees, the group encourages collaboration between the community and the schools, in efforts to enhance educational programs. The SBEC supports the schools in many ways, ranging from mini-grants for teachers to financial support for field trips and school clubs and activities.

The organization's major fundraiser is the Taste for Education, which is held every April. It also runs the Taste for Nutrition, an educational evening about healthy living, and the Unsung Heroes dinner and awards ceremony, which honors students from every Saugus school.

"Getting involved with SBEC is such an important part of what we do at Wheelabrator," said Choate. "This is our way of giving back to Saugus. We're not just there to do business; it's a partnership."

Choate began her career at Wheelabrator, at its

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I've enjoyed meeting the people in Saugus and getting to know them. Interacting with the kids and teachers really makes the job fun.

Heidi Choate

Hampton, N.H., headquarters, in November 2005. Prior to that, she served as a communications associate for a market research company in Portsmouth, as well as a reporter and copy editor for *Foster's Daily Democrat* in Dover, N.H., where she now lives. She earned her bachelor's degree in communications from Colby-Sawyer College in 1995.

At many of the Wheelabrator plants such as the one in Saugus, Choate participates, alongside management and employees, in activities designed to benefit the local community. This involvement allows Wheelabrator to foster positive local partnerships, including sponsoring wildlife

sanctuaries, public parks, senior citizen centers and its annual Symposium for Environment and Education.

"It's rewarding that community relations is one of the core components of our company," she said. "Everyone realizes that it's essential to our business to make connections with our community and our customers, and that's recognized from the top down."