

Sunday May 20, 2007

OUR SCHOOLS

Pigs on the wing to highlight school's recycling creativity Students utilize old newspapers

By [Monique Lewis](#)
 Press & Sun-Bulletin

OWEGO -- Five years ago, the Owego Free Academy lobby was filled with a flock of birds, then a school of fish a year later, followed by frogs, cats and dogs.

This year, an Owego Free Academy art class is designing flying pigs that will hang later this month from the lobby's high ceiling. The installations are entirely crafted from about 200 pounds of newspaper, OFA art teacher Susan Camin said.

"We take every piece of newspaper that anybody has," Camin said. "(Students) get extra credit for bringing in their newspapers. I try to encourage a lot of recycling."

The Owego-Apalachin Central School District is one of 16 Southern Tier districts that participate in the Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga Board of Cooperative Educational Services solid waste and recycling program. The program began in 1993. Candor and Newark Valley school districts are the only other Tioga County districts that participate in the program, according to TST BOCES.

TST BOCES picks up paper and mixed-container recycling and transports it to Tompkins County, while the cardboard is sold to Solvay Paperboard in Syracuse, said David Pitcher, facilities supervisor for TST BOCES.

So far this school year, the O-A school district recycled about 2.27 tons of mixed containers, 16.95 tons of mixed paper and 12.47 tons of cardboard, said Tony Clark, supervisor of facilities.

In comparison, the Candor school district has recycled about 4.8 tons of mixed paper, nearly 1 ton of mixed containers and 4.2 tons of cardboard, said Theodore O'Konsky, superintendent of buildings and grounds. There will probably be another ton of mixed paper by June 30.

The purpose of the TST BOCES recycling program is to provide an inexpensive service and promote recycling within the participating school districts.

Every classroom and cafeteria has recycling bins from the elementary to high school level, Tioga County school officials said.

"It starts in the grade school and the teachers work with the kids on recycling and renewable resources," O'Konsky said. "The kids are really good about it. This generation has been trained to recycle."

About 6 a.m., Head Custodian Wayne Card collects about six bags of recyclables a week at Apalachin



MONIQUE LEWIS / Press & Sun-Bulletin

Ryan Klees, a senior at Owego Free Academy, works on a flying pig made out of newspapers for an art project. A creative recycling project, more than 40 flying pigs will hang in the school lobby later this month.

B
out
 Spec
 AN
 DECK
 Call To
FREE
 www.a

Quality
 price
 fine
 line h
 (888) 22

Elementary School.

"(Sometimes), they throw tissues in the recycle bins -- that's the biggest boobo," Card said. "They tend to forget when they (leave) on a holiday or (for the summer). If we can get the kids to recycle at school, they're going to recycle at home."

Illustrated posters next to the recycling bins remind the students what and what not to recycle in each classroom.

In the past 10 years, Newark Valley recycled an average of 35 tons a year of mixed recycling, paper and cardboard, said Dick Bierl, director of facilities services. The average has increased about 25 percent, yet the student population has decreased. Bierl attributes it to an increased use of vending machines, bottles, cans and paper products.

However, the mixed-paper tonnage has continued to decline since 2000, which is a concern of TST BOCES. This means a decrease in revenue.

There could be two explanations for the decrease, Pitcher said. A lot of schools are using technology-based instruction and completing forms online. However, districts might need a reminder, he said.

"When we first started this program, the schools were educating the staff and students and I don't think it's as fresh in people's minds," Pitcher said.

Pitcher said decreases in recycling hurts revenue that is credited back into the program that the districts pay for, and the districts are paying higher tipping fees. The Candor school district is credited about \$2,200 for recycling, O'Konsky said.

Pitcher said he would like to do more promotion with Tompkins County to remind the school districts about the importance of recycling.

Yet Bierl said his district's mixed-container tonnage was as high as it's ever been this school year at 2.6 tons. If the district puts too many recyclables in the garbage, TST BOCES will notice it and tell the school district. Other than the TST BOCES recycling program, the Newark Valley school district recycles light bulbs, tires, electronic equipment, scrap metal and more, Bierl said.

Creative recycling is always an option. Last year, elementary students decorated milk jugs as Easter baskets for their parents, O'Konsky said.

"I just feel on our end, it's a pretty viable alternative and we're doing our part to try and help lessen the landfills," O'Konsky said.

OFA senior Ryan Klees said he was going to turn the newspapers into a pig that looked like an airplane. He regularly recycles at home.

"It's important to renew and reuse resources. You can have fun with it," he said.

[↑ Our Schools index](#)



Print this article



Email this to a friend



Subscribe Now



Search our archives

[email news](#)

[mobile news](#)

[RSS](#)

[text alerts](#)

advertisement

Dear Advertiser:

**Some websites offer searching.
We offer search parties.**

Upgraded online searching lets
customers find you faster.

Yellow Pages listings
Integrated search results

Partners: Jobs: CareerBuilder.com | Cars: cars.com | Apartments: apartments.com | Shopping: ShopLo

[Customer Service](#) | [Subscribe Now](#) | [Pay Bill](#) | [Place an Ad](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Jobs With Us](#)

Press & Sun-Bulletin

Copyright © 2007 Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin

All rights reserved. Users of this site agree to the Terms of Service
and Privacy Policy/Your California Privacy Rights, updated March 2007.

Problem with this site? Please contact the webmaster.

Gannett New York network: Binghamton | Elmira | Ithaca | Poughkeepsie | Rochester | Utica | Westch

