

Students speak out about substance abuse

by NOAH RADOMSKI

Substance abuse is a very serious problem that's concerning area officials. ITAC stands for 'It Takes a Community', and its mission is to bring community awareness to this issue, and the dangers of it affecting teenagers today. In recent interviews, Iroquois students shared their thoughts and perceptions regarding substance abuse.

- Male, age 17: "Nowadays, substance abuse is a growing problem that probably won't go away anytime soon. We all have done it, and for teens today, vaping is the most abused substance."

- Male, age 18: "Alcohol is also very abusable. It messes with your head, and can lead to depression and other long-term consequences

down the road. Drugs and alcohol combined can do even greater damage to someone's body."

- Female, age 17: "Once addicted, it is hard to get out of that stage. You don't want to hurt yourself long term, so it is important to know when to say no. Don't ever be embarrassed to say no or walk away because it is in your best interest for the future."

- Male, age 18: "In my opinion, marijuana isn't a big deal and shouldn't be considered an abused substance. Anything past marijuana isn't good, and people doing that kind of stuff should get help."



To add on, Drugabuse.org cites, "The first time a person uses drugs, it's usually a free choice. However, repeated drug use can change the brain, driving a person to seek out and use drugs over and over."

Some teens may think some substances are less dangerous than others, so ITAC's goal is to bring a change in perception through awareness.

The Drug Enforcement Administration states, "When youth and young adults perceive that drug use is harmful and risky, drug use dramatically declines."

In turn, teens need to be aware of the dangers that substance abuse may hold. ITAC hopes that abuse as a whole will decrease in the near future.

New highway (Continued from page one)

"I'm pretty happy with the way things are going," he said. "It's a great crew. Everybody seems to get along, there doesn't seem to be any fighting or anything. We work well together."

The crew was in attendance at the meeting to sup-

port their colleague and new superintendent.

Also at the Jan. 8 meeting, resident Andrew Hartley asked the board to consider letting the open fields around town hall grow naturally and "return to forests," rather than continuously maintain

them as short, clear lawns. In addition to saving on maintenance time, Hartley believes that the transition would benefit the environment.

He went on to say that allowing trees to grow on the property would ultimately benefit the town's water and

air supply, as trees release oxygen into the environment and naturally filter run-off water.

Councilman Mike Nolan noted that for decades, the fields around the town hall were farmland, and that they were "never forests." Contra-

dictory to Hartley's point, Nolan said, Elma has more trees than it has ever had.

Nolan also stated that the town would like to keep the fields clear in anticipation of future uses, such as creating athletic fields in that area. By keeping them clear in the meantime, he said that the town is being saved from a "huge undertaking in the future."

Harley asked whether the creation of athletic fields at town hall was a distinct possibility, and Nolan confirmed that it was.

The next Elma Town Board meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 22, preceded by a work session at 6 p.m.



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Choirs to offer open rehearsals

Youth in the East Aurora/Elma area are invited to join one of the three ABC Canto choirs next month.

The groups meet on Thursdays at Christ United Methodist Church, 350 Saratoga Road in Amherst, and include students from schools throughout Erie and Niagara counties.

Open rehearsals will take place Jan. 9, 16, 23 and 30.

The Presto group for children in grades three through six will rehearse from 4:45 to 5:45 p.m. The Vivace group, for students with high voices in grades six through 12, will rehearse from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The Bravo group for high school students and boys whose voices have changed also rehearses from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Sixth-grade students can choose the Presto or Vivace group, based on what is more convenient for them.

For more information, visit www.abcbelcanto.org or call Sue Fay Allen at 759-6428.

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