

Kari Chavoustie Aubertine named Cape Vincent Citizen of the Year

By Kristie Stumpf Rork, Contributing Writer

Cape Vincent – Kari Chavoustie Aubertine has been named Citizen of the Year by the Cape Vincent Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs. Aubertine is the daughter of Chaumont native Joe Chavoustie and Cape Vincent native Sharon Kitto Chavoustie. She is the youngest of three children; Mike is the oldest, and Matt is in the middle. She attended Lyme Central School, graduating in 2001. She received her undergraduate degree from SUNY Oswego.

It was at college that her commitment to family and community became evident. When her classmates spent weekends doing what SUNY Oswego is known for best, she was home helping her family at the store, in the restaurant or volunteering at whatever event may have been going on in town.

After Oswego, while working on her master's from SUNY Cortland, she used her degree in Wellness Management and Health Science to become a prenatal/perinatal community outreach coordinator. She worked at workshops throughout the north country helping to educate the public about health and well-being.

She began teaching at Copenhagen after receiving her master's, but later transferred to Jefferson County Public Health (JCPH) as a public health educator. After a few years as JCPH, she realized her true passion was teaching youth and returned to teaching in the Indian River School District. However, a few years ago, the one place dearest to her heart, Lyme Central School, which she attended from kindergarten through

graduation, had a position available for her.

Amid educating the public and teaching students about health and wellness, she met and fell in love with an organic dairy farmer from Cape Vincent, Paul Aubertine. And, like every farm wife, when heifers need hay or cows need care, she is always there to help.

Educating the public, teaching youth, and helping around the farm is not why she is Citizen of the Year.

Since the days when she was driving home on weekends from Oswego, she has/is a volunteer(ed) for: the Catholic Parish Council, the Cape Vincent Improvement League, Riverside Preschool, the Playground Committee, the Cape Vincent/Bashaw Elementary PTO, and Youth Commission.

She also teaches yoga to children every year – a free program that she was able to procure through her contacts with Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Also, she and her mother have a yard sale every summer and donate the proceeds – close to \$700 – to the Cape Vincent Food Pantry.

This summer, Mrs. Aubertine topped all her community voluntary achievements when she single-handedly led the Summer Rec Program, a Youth Commission affiliate, for several weeks, with an average of 36 children per day. She provided every child a nutritious lunch (with assistance from Lynette Chapman, Thousand Islands Central School District director of food service), outings around Cape

Vincent, and trips to the library, beaches and Keewaydin pool.

Amid the teaching, farming, raising three children under 6 years of age and volunteering, Mrs. Aubertine was diagnosed with breast cancer. She endured a lumpectomy, chemotherapy treatments and radiation without once slowing down.

She routinely raises funds for breast cancer awareness and recently participated in the 20th Annual Gouverneur Breast Cancer Walk.

Mrs. Aubertine, mother of a 3-, 5-, and 6-year-old, teacher, farmer and volunteer, is an exemplary role model for the younger generation.



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