Message from the Superintendent

I hope you enjoy this latest issue of the Bulldog Bulletin. This issue covers some amazing accomplishments of our students and staff! After winter break, I will be hosting community conversations at each school and host a virtual session where I will talk about our strategic planning process and what is coming with the capital project and answer questions people have about the district. The schedule will be coming out in the coming days and I hope to see many of you attend.

Have a great holiday season!
Matt Landahl

Thanksgiving Luncheon Comes Back

Sargent students and staff were happy to welcome 75 senior citizens from the community to attend a Thanksgiving Luncheon on November 10. All the students had a hand in making this celebration a success – the fifth graders served the Thanksgiving lunch and primary students made all of the decorations. Additionally, the senior citizens were treated to a mini concert by the first graders and chorus students.

“We were so excited to bring this long standing Sargent tradition back after the pandemic pause,” Sargent Principal Cathryn Biordi said.

Sports in Beacon are sailing along nicely and included below are some neat highlights from across the district.

BHS Boys Soccer completes historic season

While they came one win short of winning a New York State public high school championship in the state Class A final on November 13 against Amityville in Suffolk County, the BHS Boys Soccer team finished their season at 14-4-2.

The team started the season with losses to Arlington and Newburgh Free Academy before finishing the amazing season at the top. The Bulldogs defeated Vestal 1-0 in a state regional semifinal and Yorktown 2-0 in a state regional final thus reaching the state semifinal. Andre Alzate had the goal against Vestal and Jack Philipbar scored early giving the Bulldogs an early lead over Yorktown.

Over time, the Bulldogs advanced to the state final with a 3-2 state semifinal win over the Christian Brothers Academy on Nov. 12 where Alzate scored two goals and Liam Murphy added one goal.

BHS Runners Compete at the State Level

BHS juniors Rachel Thorne and Henry Reinke proudly represented their school district at the Cross Country State Championship on November 12.

This year marked the second time Thorne represented Beacon at the state level and she previously took the final qualifying spot at the Section IX, Class B state qualifier on November 2 at Bear Mountain. Reinke finished seventh at the same competition.

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Pennacchio celebrates 40 years at BCSD

Rombout Custodian and BHS graduate Mike Pennacchio recently celebrated his 40th year working at BCSD and does not plan on retiring anytime soon.

“If you retire, what are you going to do, sit around?” Pennacchio said. “I like to keep busy.”

Before Pennacchio graduated from Beacon High School in 1982, he inquired about job openings and was initially told he could be given part-time work, which would eventually lead to a full-time role.

While he briefly worked at BHS last year, Pennacchio feels most at home at Rombout, where he’s worked for the bulk of his career.

“I told them, ‘Don’t move me, because I’m coming back anyway’,” Pennacchio said. “I think the principal wanted me to come back down here because I knew everything that’s going on in the gym.”

Pennacchio’s responsibilities include taking out garbage, cleaning up the building and to set up the gym for basketball games and other special events. His work ethic has been noticed by some teachers who specifically request Pennacchio to clean their classrooms.

“I help everybody out, as much as I can,” Pennacchio said. “Teachers appreciate what I do.”

The most prominent change Pennacchio has seen over the years is different employees shuffling in and out and has watched students grow before his eyes, some still remember him years after they graduated.

“They see me on the streets sometimes,” Pennacchio explained. “I’ve seen many changes in and out.”

The custodian said the kindness from district staff and administrators is what keeps him working in the district. “They’re all wonderful in this building,” he said. “Everybody’s grateful I’m here.”

Turkey Trot was a gobbling good time

Sargent Elementary School’s yearly run right before Thanksgiving was anything but a turkey.

Held on November 19, the Turkey Trot saw over 70 adults participate in the 5K portion and over 60 students do the Kids Fun Run. A group of student cheerleaders were on hand to motivate the runners as they sprinted.

A little over $1,000 was raised for the school’s student council to help fund building wide initiatives.
Students at South Ave. Elementary School are doing more than reading at their school library—they’re engaged in numerous educational and fun science projects that keep them busy and happy.

Library Media Specialist Aaron Burke has students work on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) projects such as aquaponics, a blending of fish and plant production with hydroponics, growing plants without soil. Second grade students have planted lettuce and basil and added nutrients to the produce for their survival.

“The aquaponics, we’re going to see if they can function without us,” Burke said. “They’re trying to use the nutrients from the fish.”

Burke said, “They’re trying to use the aquaponics, we’re going to see if they can function without us,” Burke explained. “Students like coming to the library generally.”

While completing science projects in the library may sound unusual, Burke said students are already using library computers for STEM related initiatives like 3D printing, so doing these projects was an easy decision.

“Moving into the other STEM areas seems like a natural fit,” Burke said. “It feels like a place where you can make a difference.”

“We have new ones that have rovers, so you have to build a circuit to make the rover work,” Burke explained. “Students like coming to the library generally.”

Pickelball, a fun sport combining elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong, has become BCSD’s new favorite sport.

Elementary students can practice their skill in this sport Wednesday mornings before school begins, while high school students practice in the afternoon on Beacon High School’s tennis courts after school is out.

After four practices, JV Forrestal Teacher Theresa Losito, who brought the game to BCSD, received rave reviews from her fifth grade students. In October, the district gave permission to extend morning sessions making everyone happy.

“Our first practice was great—smiles and excitement all around,” Losito said. “It’s so much fun.”

Fifth grader Ethan See was grateful to be able to play this sport, which will stick with him for years.

“Pickleball is very fun, I liked it so much,” See said. “I will probably be doing it in middle school.”

Fifth grader Amaziah Buffin finds the game to be enjoyable commenting how it’s like tennis and ping-pong put together.

“It’s fun to have so much fun with friends before school starts,” Buffin said.

For fifth grader Charlie Jelliffe he enjoys pickleball for a very particular reason.

“It is fun because I get to play with my friends,” he said.

BHS Junior Olivia Del Castillo has enjoyed competing against her classmates and even some of her teachers in pickleball games.

“It’s just fun to play after school,” Del Castillo said, continuing, “New people come every day.”