



# Bulldog

## BULLETIN

November 2023

### Message from the Superintendent

October is always one of the busiest months in the school year. School is in full swing and many sports, clubs, and extra-curricular activities are in motion. It is a fun month to see our students and staff engaged in learning and connecting with each other.

I am always incredibly proud of the work of our school community and this year is no different. I hope you enjoy this latest edition of the Bulldog Bulletin!

—Matt Landahl



### Intramurals Starts Students' Day in a Healthy Direction

While it is hard to get children out of bed in the morning, students at Rombout Middle School take it upon themselves to get to school early for a half hour of physical activity.



Early morning intramurals began last year and were previously held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It was changed to a daily routine when Physical Education Teacher Brianna Tobin and other instructors noticed kids coming to the gym on days intramurals were not offered. Anywhere from 30 to 40 students participate daily.

"They were sneaking down and trying to get some type of physical activity going," Tobin explained. "The numbers keep getting higher, so it's really working out."

Tobin believes the appeal of intramurals for students is choosing whatever sport they want to play, with whoever they want. This is also a perfect opportunity for students trying out for modified sports teams to work on their skills.



### Glenham Teacher Starts Year on the Right Note

Glenham Elementary School has a new music teacher for the 2023-2024 year who is not only teaching music, but also cultural dances to broaden students' horizon.



Julian Donaghey teaches general music to all grades in Glenham, as well as chorus for third to fifth graders, after previously working at Briarcliff Manor Middle School.

He was eager to join the district because Beacon is a great music-centric community.

"I just really love the community," Donaghey said. "I love it here."

The students have been very welcoming to Donaghey who finds that they are incredibly eager to participate. He returns the favor by creating a friendly environment for all.

"The kids come in and they're willing to learn music," Donaghey said. "Music is for everyone and I strive to make sure that everyone feels welcome."

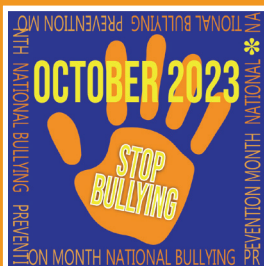
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Seventh grader Julian Carpio comes to intramurals every day to practice which he hopes will improve his chances of joining the modified soccer team. He has this piece of advice for anyone interested in participating. "Just try it out and see if you like it," Carpio said.

Seventh grader Samson Loeb participates four times a week to improve in basketball. He finds getting an early morning boost of energy helps him do better in classes. "It helps me get some energy," Loeb said. "I like getting some exercise in the morning."

### Sargent Takes a Stand Against Bullying



While it was Homecoming Week at Beacon High School, from October 2 to 6, Sargent Elementary School celebrated spirit week in a different way.

Sargent's Equity Team came up with the idea of Unity Spirit Week to align with October being National Bullying Awareness Month. Throughout the week, students wore different colors and outfits to stand united against bullying, including pajamas on Monday to "put bullying to rest."

"The days they came up with were all aligned with that theme," Sargent Principal Cathryn Biordi said. "The idea is to do everything that we can to create an environment that's inclusive."

Additionally, Biordi read aloud Patricia Polacco's *Mr. Lincoln's Way* book to a fourth grade class which centers around a teacher who intervenes into a bullying situation where the bully has to overcome his feelings of hatred. Mr. Lincoln connects with him over the bully's love of birds.

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# New Glenham Teacher *cont'd...*

On top of music, Donaghey recently taught second graders how to perform Los Machetes, a traditional Mexican folk dance in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month complete with clapping rhythm sticks. He noted that it is crucial for kids to connect with their respective cultures, but also learn about others.

“It’s essential to learn about other people who are different from you,” he said. “It’s great to see the kids light up.”

The next event Donaghey is preparing his students for will be winter choral concerts in December.

“We’re going to hopefully have some holiday cheer,” Donaghey said. “I’m really excited to work here.”

Outside of work, Donaghey loves hiking, kayaking and listening to all kinds of music. However, one pop star is currently grabbing his attention. “I’ve really just been into Taylor Swift,” Donaghey said. “She’s been all over the place.” §

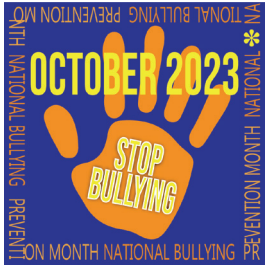


## Educates Students on Hispanic Culture

Students in Karen DeCandia’s 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes at Rombout Middle School celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month, albeit in a different fashion.



Rather than write a research paper, the students participated in an escape room situation where they deducted and broke down clues to stop an art thief who made off with works by legendary Hispanic artists like Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. The stakes were raised when DeCandia announced that the top prize would be a gift certificate to Glazed Over Donuts. *Cont’d on pg 3...*



# Sargent Takes a Stand Against Bullying *cont'd...*

“That’s the thing that gave the student the confidence to not pick on others,” Biordi explained. “Once the student picking on others had their confidence built up, then they saw a difference.”

In conjunction with this book’s message, students participated in a project called “Every Birdy Deserves Confidence” where they colored in pictures of birds, which were later displayed.

“It’s a simple little activity, but it just perpetuates the message from the book,” Biordi said.

For Biordi and the Equity Team, introducing an anti-bullying message early on sets the tone for the school year, which will continue well past Unity Spirit Week. “It’s not like we put this subject to rest when October’s over,” she said. “It’s something that we are trying to instill into the kids.”

# Flexing Their Muscles in à la Seconde and More at BALLET ARTS STUDIO



South Avenue’s kindergarteners paid a visit to Ballet Arts Studio on October 11 not only to plié and

assemblé, but also to build up self-esteem.

The students along with teachers Alicia Smith, Vicki Hoerup, Madison Copeland and Anthony Melfi, walked to Ballet Arts for the free class led by Ballet Arts’ Artistic Director Katie Bissinger. They learned about different dance styles and how rhythms and tempos make people want to move their bodies.

“Children warmed up their feet and bodies through a variety of guided stretches while using their imagination,” Smith recalled. “Ms. Katie invited children to move their bodies creatively by listening to the music.”

Bissinger looks forward to seeing BCSD’s youngest learners every fall because she wants them to experience at least one dance class to receive a confidence boost. “You can see kids who come in kind of shy and scared of having to dance in front of other people,” Bissinger said.

“After an hour, you see them so joyful; it’s rewarding to see the power dance has.” One way Bissinger has students conquer fears is to lay down and have them jump over her.

“The moment they get over me they go, ‘Wow, I did that,’” Bissinger said. “It lifts them up to a point where they’re so proud of themselves.”



The students raved about the visit, which Smith noted is a great chance for them to learn while building confidence. “Our students were on this field trip for almost two hours and were able to exercise their mind and body thoroughly,” Smith said.

Some students are inspired after a trip to come back for lessons with Bissinger recalling how she taught BHS’ Class of 2023 Valedictorian Lila Quinn since she was little.

“She’s a perfect example of how dance forms them as a person,” Bissinger said. “It does stick with them.”



*Beacon High School has a new Fishing Club that has already made a splash by giving back to the community.*



Sophomores Dylan Hetrick and Tye Elias started the club in June with the simple goal of getting more people to fish in Beacon. So far, over 30 students have joined to catch and release fish, largely trout and bass, at a nearby creek taught largely by the two boys once a month. Hetrick enjoys teaching his fellow students about a hobby that he has grown up with and even taught Elias before the club’s founding.

“I just wanted to spread awareness of it,” Hetrick said. “We have people that were introduced to fishing because of the club.”

In honor of his grandmother who died of breast cancer, Hetrick wanted to raise money for the local charity **Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation**. *Cont’d on pg 3...*



# Escape Room on Hispanic Culture

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DeCandia found out about this activity through the online marketplace Teachers Pay Teachers and she hopes it enlightens students to further study Hispanic artists and their work.



"It has a lot of art, which we don't get to talk about a lot in class," DeCandia said. "I've never done an escape room before and always wanted to do one."



Throughout the year, DeCandia introduces her students to the various cultures

of the Spanish speaking countries and hopes they gain a respect and understanding of them.

"It's important for them to learn about different cultures in the world," she said. "It can broaden their horizons."

Eighth grader Madison Sykes enjoyed getting together with her classmates to solve the clues in the activity, with some being more challenging than others.

"It helps to get together to work and learn communications skills," Sykes said. "People get to explore the culture and have fun with it."



# Gone Fishin' cont'd...

They raised over \$100 by selling t-shirts. Hetrick and Elias plan to organize fundraisers for other charities throughout the school year. "I wanted to give back," Hetrick said.

While many of the club participants have their own equipment, the boys hope to raise money to buy fishing rods, lines and other related equipment to provide for anyone who does not.

"We want to try to get more people and sell new shirts for the holidays," Hetrick said. "We think about new ideas for fundraising."

Hetrick encourages students to give fishing a try and anyone with questions can contact the club's own **Instagram** page at [beacon\\_fishing\\_club](#).

"If you really want to start fishing, join the club," Hetrick said. "We can get you started."



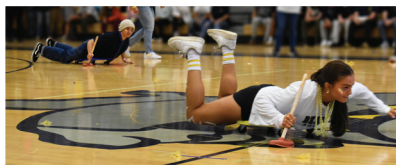
# Spirit Week Ends with a Bang!



Beacon High School students celebrated towards the end of Homecoming Week on October 6 with wacky costumes, fun activities and tons of school pride.



Special themed days were held throughout the week including Blue & Gold Day, where students proudly took selfies in their school's colors enhanced with crowns, tutus and feather scarves.



The school band knocked out great tunes, while the Beacon Bulldog mascot busted a move. The Class of 2024 roared into the gym shouting "Let's go seniors!" while the other grades tried to

outdo them in the noise department. While Sophomore James Bouchard enjoyed Homecoming Week as a whole, he was impressed by the pep rally's unmatched energy.

"There was a lot of good energy there," Bouchard said. "It's all about showing pride in your school."

Next up the Dance & Step Team performed a special routine, where teachers and staff joined in, followed by the varsity cheerleaders doing what they do best.



However, it was the wild and wacky games that stole the show, which included musical chairs where students and staff battled it out to save their seats and a four way Tug of War between all grades, where the freshmen emerged victorious. Sophomore Janae Gibson-Bocus felt everyone outdid themselves to make the rally even better than last year. "The games were really funny," Gibson-Bocus said.