



Bulldog

BULLETIN

End of Year Edition 2024

Message from the Superintendent

Thank you so much to the Beacon community for an outstanding 2023-24 school year! Seeing our Class of 2024 walk across the stage was inspiring last week. We have a busy summer ahead of us with teacher curriculum work, capital project work impacting all of our schools, and policy development. Thank you again for all of your support.

—Matt Landahl



Beacon's Distinguished Grads Honored



Two Beacon seniors were celebrated, along with

students from

12 other Dutchess County school districts, during the annual Dutchess BOCES Distinguished Graduate Recognition Breakfast on June 6 at the Culinary Institute of America.

Deputy Superintendent Jodi DeLucia and Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino welcomed guests before breakfast and the recognitions followed, with each district presenting its own students. Valedictorian Isabella Migliore and Salutatorian Wallace Wei were honored for their academic and extracurricular achievements.

Migliore, who will study biology at Wesleyan University, has been a standout athlete at BHS, where she played varsity soccer and ran varsity indoor and outdoor track for all four years. Superintendent Dr. Matthew Landahl noted her athletic prowess led the Wesleyan representatives to ask Migliore to compete in cross country, something she never did before. "That doesn't happen very often," Landahl said. "Congratulations to Bella for all your achievements."

Wei, who will study computer science at Cornell, made the district proud by representing Beacon at the New York State Math League competition for two years.

"He is just a great representative for the school," Landahl said of Wei. "He's an incredible student."

Cont'd on pg 3... (full bios next pg)

MEET THE CLASS OF 2024 VAL & SAL

BHS is proud of seniors Isabella Migliore and Wallace Wei, who were named this year's valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively. Both spoke at the graduation ceremony June 20 at Heritage Financial Park. The district congratulates these two exceptional students.

VALEDICTORIAN



Migliore, who will study biology at Wesleyan University, was happy to achieve this distinction, something her family hoped she would be.

"I'm happy that I made my family proud," she said. "It proves how hard I worked through high school."

Migliore kept busy at BHS between the Mock Trial club, Student Council and participating in soccer and winter and spring track. She plans to stick with track in college.

"Track has been a huge part of my high school career," she said. "I had a good time here."

One element about BHS that Migliore will miss the most is the supportive teachers and her guidance counselor, Michelle Polhamus, who helped her succeed.

"It definitely feels like a great support system," Migliore said. "Everyone is just there to help you and push you forward."

SALUTATORIAN



While Wei, who will study computer science at Cornell University, appreciates the kudos of being named second in class, he is more concerned about college and honing his math skills.

"It's OK, it's par for the course," Wei said of the distinction. "I focus a lot of my time on math."

During his time at BHS, Wei participated in the Mock Trial and Math Club, the latter of which he counted as his favorite. He does not have any particular favorite memories, but enjoyed his time at BHS.

"It's nice being here," Wei said. "It's pretty chill."

For his fellow seniors and juniors who will graduate next year, Wei recommends keeping an open mind and focusing on a particular hobby or skill early on.

"Find what you like a little earlier," he said. "Try some different stuff."

Field Trips Educate, Excite, and Enlighten!

As the school year comes to a close, students and teachers are celebrating by visiting new and familiar locations, locally and far away.

Italian class visits



Thanks to a grant from the Beacon Foundation for Schools, Rombout foreign language teacher Erica Hughes' Italian language class went on a cultural trip to New York City's Little Italy this spring.

Hughes' class took a walking tour of the neighborhood, where students were encouraged to imagine what the area was like in the early 20th century when Italian immigrants first arrived. Students enjoyed recognizing signs in Italian from being in class.

"It makes it a little bit more real and meaningful, instead of just learning words out of a textbook," Hughes explained. "Little Italy has a lot of history."

They capped off the experience with lunch at a local restaurant and stopping for pastries and gelato later. "I wanted to try and do an experience that would bring in some culture," Hughes said. "It was a really fun trip."

Seventh grader Ivy Cohen was excited to return to her old neighborhood and even passed by her previous residence. She most enjoyed visiting a 135-year-old bakery to try some lemon merengue pie.

"The food was so good, it was indescribably good," Cohen said.

For Cohen, she appreciated learning from the tour guide whose family lives in the neighborhood, an experience that enhances her learning.

"You can't always learn things in a classroom," Cohen said. "It helps to be where it happens."



Cont'd next page...

Performers Shine at Theater Awards



Two BHS students, who were the leads in this year's production of "The Phantom of the Opera,"

performed in front of Broadway legends at the 2024 Roger Rees Awards for Excellence in Student Performance in mid-May at John Jay College.

The awards, named in honor of the late stage actor, recognize distinctive student performances and outstanding achievement in high school music theater programs in the New York City area.

Freshman Molly Lyons and sophomore Jonah Espinosa, were chosen as outstanding performer nominees, with Lyons being named a finalist.

Lyons learned two numbers with her fellow performers and was coached by Jelani Remy, whose Broadway credits



include "Back to the Future: The Musical," in order to perform for the judges.

"It felt like 'America's Got Talent'; you're standing in a crowd of people and they call your name," Lyons recalled. "I was literally so scared."

Cont'd next page...

Sargent goes to the FARM

Students from Dawn Hammond and Kaitlyn Perlongo's first grade classes saw where food is grown and met some of the animals that live at **COMMON GROUND** Farm during their field trip.



With a little help from farmer James Rapp, students picked kale leaves straight from the field, which they used to make a salad with apples, cranberries and a homemade dressing. This was Maggie Derevanik's favorite activity because it brought up a fond memory. "I like making salad with my mama," she said. "It tasted good."



Students then toured the barn where they saw sheep and cows and had the chance to pet a lamb and a chicken. While she didn't get to see the farm's pigs, Kiana James enjoyed all aspects of the trip. "I liked the part when we made the salad and went in the barn and saw the animals," James said.



Glenham Writes to their Heart's Content



It takes plenty of work to create a story and Glenham students are experiencing that process firsthand in the school's Creative Writing Club.

The club is offered before school starts in 10, two-week sessions throughout the year. Students have to complete a book from start to finish by the end of the last session, which started May 1.

Despite this structure, students are given free rein to write about topics that interest them. Club adviser Donna McGinley finds that when students love to write it carries over into the classroom.

"They're the authors and illustrators of their own books," McGinley said. "They're able to spark creativity through storytelling and writing."

In late February, the young writers showed their works in progress to professional illustrator Bryan Collier, whose credits include "Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope" and "Thurgood."

"That was very engaging and moving for the students," McGinley recalled. "They were like, 'Wow, he started out just like we did.'"

Despite the early morning sessions, third grader Hailey Kotchie enjoy's writing about cats, drawing pictures and bouncing ideas off of her classmates.

"This club is really fun," Kotchie said. "We can share the books and get some ideas."

Fourth grader and aspiring author Paige Johnson has been with the club since its inception two years ago and has since written twenty stories. She credits the club for helping her improve her writing and to produce more of it.

"It started off with three pages and they didn't look so good, then I did more and more pages," Johnson recalled. "I try to get better at drawing and writing."

Springing into Action at JV Forrestal

Spring celebrated at Forrestal where kindergarteners and first graders in special education teacher Jessica White's class have learned all the ways why this is such a special season.



In the ELA portion of class, students learned about plant parts, what living things are, what they need to survive, and how to say nature-related words in sign language. "We've done 20 words so far," White said. "We try to incorporate them into our daily conversation."

Students also grew lima beans, monitored the lifecycle of a caterpillar and created colorful sun catchers to decorate the classroom.

Cont'd next page...

Cont'd from previous page...

Performers Shine at Theater Awards

While Lyons did not win the grand prize, she could not have asked for a better experience, where she learned that being humble goes a long way.

"If you are nice to your directors and crew, it just helps so much," Lyons said. "I feel like I won because I met so many great people."



Espinosa appreciated the unique and constructive advice given to him and his fellow nominees by Broadway professionals. The biggest lesson was how important it is to be oneself.

"It didn't matter if it wasn't your song, you could take the advice and apply it to your own," Espinosa explained. "There's so many levels to it."

While Espinosa was sad not to advance further, he respected his fellow contestants' efforts and appreciated the opportunity.

"The kids in my group were so amazing, I couldn't be mad," Espinosa said. "I learned so much from all this."

"You can't see them, but hearing people cheer is cool and you do it with people you love," he said.

Beacon's DISTINGUISHED GRADS Honored

Cont'd from pg 1...

Keynote speaker Pius Kayiira, founder and CEO of the Winner's Circle Project, encouraged students to maximize opportunities as they arise and to simply be good people, as it will open many doors.



"Approach everything with the right energy because at the end of the day I don't know the last time I hired somebody and said, 'Wow, what was your SAT score?'" Kayiira said. "I wanted to make sure they were a good teammate, a person that I wanted to see in the office."



White incorporated more projects in May, which focused on camping. “We’re still going to keep up with the idea of outdoor functioning,” White explained.

“I need more time to cover additional topics. “White and her teaching assistants come up with different themes for every month of the school year and she noted the importance of offering students more than just related art projects. “It has to be meaningful activities that are hands on and that are memorable,” White said. “It has to have a purpose.”



Music Theory

Expands Students' Knowledge

Students at BHS have challenged themselves to be even better musicians by taking a Music Theory course which proved to be difficult, but rewarding.

The course, taught by music teacher Susan Wright, introduces motivated students to the study of topics such as melody, harmony, and musical analysis. They also develop critical musicianship skills along the way including dictation, listening and sight-singing, the ability to read and sing music at first sight.

Sophomore Piper Bruno, a percussionist, noted that her goal for the course was to get better at her instrument. She has enjoyed learning reading music and about different clefs, signs placed at the beginning of a piece to determine the pitch.



“I want to get a better grasp on how music is made,” Bruno said. “It’s really tedious and difficult at times, but it’s still very fun.” While senior Kimora Henry, a school chorus member, was familiar with some basic music theory from middle school, she considers this course more encompassing where she understands the meaning and structure behind a song. She compared the class to threads on a blanket.

“You get all the little pieces of where they go and how they fit in together and give you this beautiful piece,” Henry explained. “I really get to see how all of it works together.”

Henry noted that there is a friendly competitive aspect between the band members and chorus students, which encourages her to want to learn more.

“The competitiveness makes me want to be like, ‘I have to figure this out,’” Henry said. “They push me to really deep dive.”

