



Bulldog

BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2025

Message from the Superintendent

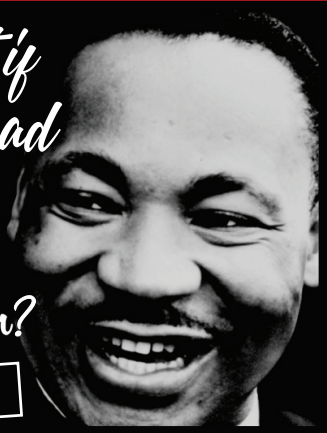
I hope everyone is having a great February and an outstanding Black History Month!

In this issue, you will find amazing stories of our students, staff, and families. You will also learn about some of our amazing alumni!

I hope you enjoy reading about our community!

—Matt Landahl

What if
MLK had
Instagram?
Goto pg. 3



Students Win Big at Annual MLK Event

Students across the district honored Martin Luther King Jr. by writing essays highlighting famous quotes and actions from the late civil rights leader with the theme of “Keeping the Dream Alive” for an annual contest.

Second grader Amelia Scott, fourth grader Edith Lieberman, as well as fifth graders Gavin Berry and Alice Courtney were named winners of the MLK Essay Writing Content and honored Feb. 17 during an annual birthday celebration at the Historic Springfield Baptist Church.



Cont'd on next pg...



Beacon's Best Athletes Honored at Annual Dinner

Five Beacon High School alumni athletes and one sports team were inducted into the Eric J. Romanino Athletics Hall of Fame for 2024 during a ceremony at St. Rocco Society Banquet Hall on Jan. 3.

It recognizes athletes, coaches and others for their athletic achievements in the district, but also at the local, state and national levels.

The 1999-2000 Boys Bowling Team



The team won a Section One Championship where Josh McCarty sealed the victory with two strikes in the 10th frame winning the section by nine pins. This led the team to competing in the New York State (NYS) championship tournament in Vestal.

Dan Soto Class of 1997, Baseball

Soto is considered the most exciting baseball player ever to don the school colors because he earned second team All-State honors as a senior, the first Beacon student to do so, and was also awarded the All County, All League and the Dutchess County Player of the Year.

Kristin MacDonald Class of 1989, Softball



MacDonald was part of the softball team that won three league championships and a NYS Championship. Individually, MacDonald, a team captain, was awarded All League honors for three years, as well as All Section, “Poughkeepsie Journal” and “Evening News” All Star honors for two years.

Joanne Greggo Hockler, Class of 1989, Softball



Greggo Hockler was instrumental in leading her team to three league championships, two sectional championships and a NYS championship. She was awarded All League and All Section honors during her junior and senior years and was considered a catalyst for an offense which scored 329 runs in 26 games during the team's historic NYS championship season.

Tom Kirby Class of 1988, Baseball



Kirby was considered one of the most tenacious competitors to step foot in the baseball diamond by leading the Bulldogs to two league championships in 1987 and 1988. He was also one of the few players during the mid-1980's that were the pillars for the baseball team's dominance for years to come.

Kyle Davis Class of 2017, Wrestling



Davis was a Section One Champion who placed fourth in the NYS championships, an achievement that only one out of five Beacon wrestlers have accomplished. He boasts 163 career wins, as well as being a four-time All-League recipient, among others. Davis is considered one of the best Beacon wrestlers who went on to collegiate level.

Congratulations!
Inductees

Students Win Big at Annual MLK Event

Lieberman, who quoted from King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” noted that it was important for her to submit an essay so readers know the contributions he made to the country.



“It would be a lot different if he hadn’t changed what he changed,” Lieberman said. “A lot of people wouldn’t be equal to other people, so it’s important to keep that message going.”

Berry submitted his essay because he appreciates King’s message of everyone being treated fairly.

“It’s a good dream to have, to help people out,” Berry said.

Beacon Alum and “The Voice” Contest Comes Home

Country singer and Beacon alumni Alison

Elena, who competed in the 26th season of the singing competition show “The Voice,” visited Sargent earlier this winter



to talk to students about her musical journey, while encouraging them to follow their dreams.

Elena, who graduated BHS in 2013, was invited by

Principal Cathryn Biordi to talk with her students and play some songs to which she happily obliged. She often visits family and on this visit she reunited with her sixth grade music teacher Maureen Stickney who now teaches at Sargent. *Cont’d on next page...*

2025 BCSD STUDENT FILM FEST

PRESENTED BY THE FOUNDATION FOR BEACON SCHOOLS

Beacon is home to many creative types and your children can be some of them! Students can submit a short film of two minutes of less for the 2025 Student Film Fest, sponsored by the Foundation for Beacon Schools.

The submissions can be a comedy, drama, music video, documentary or whatever kind of film students are interested in that can easily be shot on camera phones.



Esports League Ends Season with Victory

Rombout’s esports league wrapped up its season in early winter during the final championship at Contender Esports in Wappingers Fall by winning in the game “Rocket League,” a dream come true for the team.



The team ended its overall season with a score of 14-4. During this event, students participated in “Super Smash Brothers,” a one-on-one game, as well as “Madden NFL” and the aforementioned “Rocket League,” which are more team oriented.

“This is like a big Super Bowl kind of day,” adviser Joseph Junjulas explained. “This has been our best season yet.”

Junjulas appreciated the competition from other school districts such as Poughkeepsie and Arlington, describing them as fierce, and added that esports are similar to any competitive sport, it is just played on

a computer rather than on a field.

“Esports is just as competitive as other sports,” Junjulas said. “The competition’s been growing and that’s what we like.”

Students do not have to be knowledgeable about video games to participate with Junjulas noting that esports can be a motivating factor for students to attend school.

“They’re excited to participate in this which means that they’re excited to come to school,” Junjulas said. “It also helps to have a coach who cares about the program and wants to see it grow.”

Seventh grader Lucian Coto appreciates the competitiveness of esports and offered these tips to students interested in joining the team.

“They should have good sportsmanship and should always try their best,” Coto said. “I think it’s very good.”

District Honors Lunar New Year

This school year marked the first time the Beacon City School District had a day off to honor Lunar New Year. In anticipation of this, some of our families visited the district’s elementary schools to teach them more about the traditions surrounding this holiday.

At Sargent, parent Audrey Tan returned for a second year to talk with her daughter Owen Davidson’s first grade class about the holiday and showed off some of the foods her family eats during the holiday, including pineapple cakes. Each student received a lai see, or red envelope filled with chocolate coins, in lieu of the traditional money and they even learned how to say “Happy New Year” in Chinese.

Tan loves sharing her family traditions with her daughter’s classmates who she found were very excited to learn about them. “Most holidays are very similar so I think it shows the connection between people and communities, even though we’re not the same,” Tan explained. “It broadens our world.”



Click Here



Submissions are due by April 15 and three screenings of the films will be held in Mid-May at Beacon High School’s Seeger Theater.

or scan QR CODE for all the info! →



Beacon Alum and “The Voice” Contest Comes Home



“I love coming back to Beacon whenever I can,” Elena said.

Elena shared about pursuing a music career in Nashville and how it was the producers of the NBC juggernaut who invited her to audition.

After impressing the judges, Elena was mentored by country superstar Reba McEntire, who she lovingly described as “a Southern sweet grandma.”

“Them finding me was a boost of confidence,” Elena said. “It was like music summer camp for adults.”

While Elena did not win the season, she has received a slightly larger following and is hopeful it will land her more gigs.

“It makes people want to hear you, even if they don’t care about the show” she explained. “It’s opened up new doors for me a little bit.”



The students showered Elena with stickers and hugs and she was impressed by their thoughtful questions about performing.

She left the students with a valuable message to keep with something they are passionate about.

“As long as you’re OK taking the ‘no’s’ you can make a career out of it and I think that’s what the teachers wanted them to hear,” Elena said. “I’m not a millionaire and I don’t have a big fancy record deal, but I’m doing it and that’s enough for me.”

“She said, ‘don’t try and back down, you can try again,’” Devin recalled. “She was really cool and her voice was beautiful.”



Despite never practicing with many of her fellow musicians prior to the first day of the festival, eighth grader Kylie Ebeling, who plays the trumpet, loved hearing the fruits of their labor sound so good.

“Once it’s all together, it sounds really nice,” Ebeling said. “I hope to hear how everyone else sounds because we’ll be playing with a lot of the people next year and years to come.”

If students are interested in playing at the festival, Ebeling recommends taking it seriously, but also be willing to improvise when necessary.



Hista Instagram

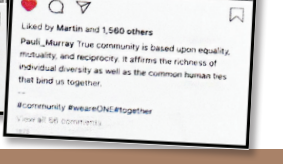
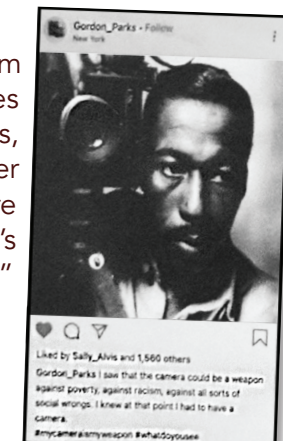
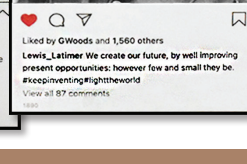
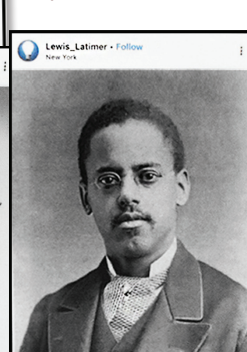
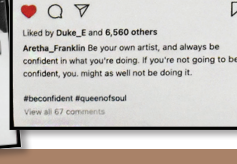
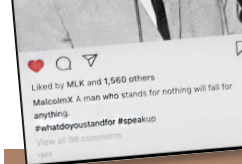
“Histogram” Posts Lead to Informative Presentations

Rombout students in special education teacher Antonietta Iovenio’s class are learning about the accomplishments of legendary African Americans this Black History Month through a rather unusual method.

A series of Instagram styled posts from prominent African American figures such as photographer Gordon Parks, activist Coretta Scott King and trumpeter Louis Armstrong, among others were displayed outside of Iovenio’s classroom dubbed “Histogram.”

Iovenio shared that the display is used as a starting point for students to research about these figures in order to create a Google Slides presentation.

She noted that this project allows students to explore the lives and contributions of important individuals who made a lasting impact on society.



Beacon Hosts Junior High All-County Festival

Twenty-two students from Rombout Middle School and Beacon High School showed off their musical acuity and played with musicians from other schools on home turf during the Junior High All-County Festival in late January. Sponsored by the Dutchess County Music Educators Association, the festival saw all-county band, orchestra and chorus rehearsing and performing various pieces together in different spaces at Beacon High School.

“You have to be loose with it,” Ebeling explained. “Music is supposed to come from how you know how to play it and from the people around you.”

Eighth grader Daley Stadler, who plays the clarinet, noted that while the rehearsals could sometimes be tedious, the payoff is well worth it.

“I love a good performance, it’s so much fun,” Stadler said. “I feel like music is the one skill that I’m the best at.”



COMING SOON!

Parents Night

PARENTS & ROMBOUT STUDENTS

Elementary parents in need of a short break from adulting can sign up for the annual "Parents Night Out!" on Feb. 28.

The event, sponsored by Rombout's National Junior Honor Society (NJHS), runs from 6 to 8:30 pm in the school's cafeteria and gym. Students can have some snacks and participate in a multitude of fun indoor sports, board games and spring-themed arts and crafts, all manned by the NJHS students.

"It's a fun night for the kids, but also gives the parents something to do," adviser Monica Paredes said.



"This is our way to give back not only to the school community, but also to the Beacon community."

The event initially started as a chance to give the NJHS students a project to engage in together during the slower winter season.

"They do a great job having fun with them, it's cute to see them having fun," Paredes said of her students. "We always remind them they are leaders of the building and they have to act appropriately."

Eighth grader Natalie Allen is excited to get to show the younger students around Rombout as a group leader and initially joined NJHS to help better the school community.

"The parents can have a break while we bring the kids to have fun and that's great," Allen said. "There are many different ways we can help the community."

Families can use the QR code provided to sign their children up. All money earned goes toward a charity of the NJHS' choosing.



Be sure to fill out the form!

The Rombout Middle School National Junior Honor Society is hosting... Parents Night Out! ...

Fame

The Musical Jr. is a True Student Led Production



The Beacon Players Younger Company put on a stellar production of "Fame The Musical Jr." in mid-January with some help from two Beacon High School seniors who are musical theater professionals.

Seniors Anabelle Arginsky and Anastasia Santisi directed this musical focused on diverse students committing to grueling arts and academic work at New York City's High School for the Performing Arts.

The girls chose this story because it was the first musical they did in sixth grade, but the classic songs also sealed the deal for Santisi.

"I just fell in love with the music," Santisi explained. "Every really awesome aspect of the show is really complex and incorporates everything I love about theater."

The girls had assistance from fellow Beacon Players which helped out as Arginsky noted it was sometimes tough for the young actors to focus. Nonetheless, she gave them kudos for their hard work and talent, adding that a solid relationship between them and the actors is key.

"They're working with not a lot of space and time and are doing a fantastic job," Arginsky said. "Having the opportunity to do something that we love with people that we love is amazing."

Seventh grader Preston Bennett, who portrayed the character of Tyrone, enjoyed working with Arginsky and Santisi because they related to him better than an older director. "They kind of get us more and they know us better," Bennett said of the girls.



Sargent Thanks Veterans with Cards & Candy

For eight years, Sargent teaching assistant Tracy Gida and members of the school's student council collected handmade cards and chocolates to give to local veterans at Castle Point VA Medical Center.

This year's project saw over 100 cards delivered to veterans, who Gida finds appreciate the gesture by writing a "thank you" letter to the students.

Gida's father served in the Navy and has friends that are veterans too, adding that their service to ensure freedom for all is a motivating factor to do this project.

What makes Sargent's efforts stand out to other schools is that the student council also send cards to veterans for Veterans Day,



keeping the appreciation going throughout the year. Gida instills a message to her students of paying it forward without any expectation of getting something in return when they work on charitable projects.

"I love just seeing them participate in the community," Gida said.

Student council member Michaela Jaywor, a fifth grader, has usually included a message of thanking veterans in English on her cards, but this year wrote that message in Morse code. She shared why this project is important.

"It reminds veterans that we're thankful for them," Jaywor said. "We don't forget about them and we're grateful for them."