



# Bulldog

BULLETIN

March 2023

## Message from the Superintendent

Community Conversations

*Rescheduled*

The Virtual Superintendent Community Conversation for March 7<sup>th</sup> has been **rescheduled to Wednesday, March 15 at 7pm.** We are having some technical issues with Zoom.

Thanks to all who attended the community conversations this winter. I appreciated people coming out on cold winter nights to talk about the district. We are currently working on developing our district budget for the 23-24 school year. We have several focus areas as we are working on ways to increase academic and mental health support and broaden extra-curricular offerings for all of our students. Stay tuned for more information on the budget in the coming weeks.

-Matt Landahl

# CELEBRATING



# BLACK HISTORY 2023

Students at Glenham Elementary School were treated to a laser light show chronicling two centuries of African American history and achievements on February 9.

Students were up on their feet dancing to laser images of legendary African American musicians such as Aretha Franklin, James Brown and Chuck Berry performing their biggest hits. In-between the songs, students listened with awe and cheered for speeches from Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Barack Obama, who moved effortlessly and beautifully across the screen.

The history presented in the 40-minute show stretched as far back as to the late 1700s and put a spotlight on African Americans who fought in both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, through to the Civil Rights movement.

And it wasn't just the students that enjoyed the show – members of the district community sang its praises in comments on Instagram.

The show came courtesy of Prismatic Magic, who provides numerous educational laser assemblies to schools nationwide, and Beacon's Parent Teacher Student Organization.



This year's festival will take place in mid-May and the deadline for submissions is April 17. [Click here for more information.](#)

## Forrestal students honor Black History Month

LouAnn Joyce's first grade class at JV Forrestal Elementary School honored Black History Month with art projects inspired by the work of an African American author and illustrator team.



The students spent February reading several books by author Lesa Cline-Ransome and her illustrator husband James Ransome.

Inspired by a collage work featuring a rabbit that James completed, the students created one of their own in a day.

"We had a whole bunch of paper and they could do whatever animal or object they wanted," Joyce explained. "We didn't waste materials and all they used was construction paper."

Every year Joyce has her students study legendary African American figures, but this year decided to put a spotlight on the Ransomes, a successful creative team.



"Because they're author and illustrator, they just perfectly go together," Joyce said.

The students undertook another project, inspired by the Ransomes' book "The Quilt Alphabet," where they each

painted two letters of the alphabet along with a description of an animal or object that begins with those letters. This was done in collaboration with art teacher Cathy Pezzo and the works were put up in the hallway, as part of the school's annual Gallery Walk event.

"In the book here, they wrote clues to tell us what the letter was," Joyce said. "We put in the animals and then we put in the details."

The students were immensely proud of their projects and Joyce is excited to introduce similar assignments for Women's History Month in March, which should be a well-rounded experience.

"We really have loved doing it," she said. "It's all a vehicle to teach them how to read and write."



## Sargent ES to host



SCIENCE | TECHNOLOGY | ENGINEERING | ARTS | MATHEMATICS

**F** A I R

Sargent's elementary school students interested in **Science, Technology, Electronics, Arts and Math, or STEAM**, activities are in luck because the school will host its first ever STEAM fair on **May 18<sup>th</sup>** at the school's auditorium.

Sargent Principal Cathryn Biordi has wanted to see a science fair come to her school for some time. Middle School Science Teacher Marissa Benson liked the idea and thought it would be beneficial to include other disciplines so students as young as kindergarten could participate in making art projects that incorporate one of the other elements.

"It opened up the door to more options," Benson said.

"Our goal is for them to choose two of the five disciplines."

Benson and Biordi presented the fair idea during a Board of Education meeting on January 9 which was approved.

"I really tried to give ideas that were appropriate for our cluster of grades," Benson explained. "It's in the planning phase."

Benson is hopeful the fair will kindle an interest in science for the students and that they take pride in the projects, whether they win or not.

"I'm just hoping for the kids to be enthusiastic," Benson said. "You want them to feel proud of something they accomplished."

## Beloved Sargent security guard retires



The 76-year-old Landisi started his Beacon career as a substitute security guard working in different buildings and accepting a full-time opening

at Sargent where he watched students grow before his eyes. After five years of service and dedication at Sargent, security guard Jerry Landisi has called it a day.

What Landisi will miss the most is the staff and students he interacted with on a daily basis.

"I'm going to be sad to leave because it's like family here," Landisi said. "The kids are a lot of fun."

While Landisi is stepping away from his full-time job, he plans to still serve as a substitute security guard when needed.

"It's a really nice place," Landisi said.

Working at Sargent was only a small part of Landisi's lengthy career. He worked in aviation administration for the Navy, was the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for an electronics company and was a City of Beacon councilman.

Landisi said the timing is right to step back and spend time with his wife and they plan to travel once she retires in June.

"I'll do stuff around the house and have coffee with a couple of buddies once in a while," Landisi said. "Now it's time to really step back a little and enjoy life."



## Beacon team shoots hoops for a good cause

The Beacon High School Boys Basketball team participated in a friendly competition against Red Hook High School on February 4 to help raise an impressive \$11,000 for the American Cancer Society at Dutchess Committee College.

The event, hosted by the local organization Hudson Valley Boys Basketball Referees, has become a major tradition in the basketball community for the past nine years where teams from area high schools compete against each other in five matchups throughout the day.

"I'm proud that our organization has helped raise over \$80,000 and will once again host this tournament in support of such an important cause," Tournament Chairperson Mark Hurley said.

While Beacon beat Red Hook 56 to 53, the opportunity to help raise money for a good cause was the real prize. Coach Patrick Schetter thanked the organizers for giving his team and others a chance to play at a local collegiate site, all for a noble cause.

## JV Forrestal Goes Bananas for Rainforest Animal Projects



Fifth graders at JV Forrestal ES worked hard in February conducting research on animals that live in the rainforest and wrote persuasive essays on the importance of saving the rainforest.

Avery Persico had fun learning about the colorful toucan where she put together slides about where the birds are normally found and what they do with their families.

"I thought it would be fun to do toucans because they look so cute," Persico said.

Lucinda Arginsky chose the anaconda and was fascinated to learn that unlike other predators that poison their prey, anacondas wrap themselves around animals like deer and wild pigs, before eating them.

"They could eat a human, but humans are their biggest predators, so they don't," Arginsky explained.

"It's an interesting topic to learn about."

Alicia Green chose to focus on the ocelot, a spotted wild cat, because she loves felines of all breeds. One interesting fact Green did not know was that ocelots are very independent.

"They have families, they just don't spend time together," Green said. "They just do their own thing."

Amaziah Buffin recently started work on her project about chimpanzees, but this is not her first time learning about them. Back in second grade, Buffin completed a research project on anthropologist Dr. Jane Goodall, who she admires.

"I really liked it and wanted to continue it," Buffin said. "I love Jane Goodall."





# CAFÉ JOYCE

MATH WITH A SIDE OF CHIPS 2023

Seventh grade students in Zachary Joyce's math class at Rombout Middle School learned valuable math and life skills while sitting in a relaxing restaurant setting during an annual activity called Café Joyce in January.



Joyce started this activity four years ago where, at the end of a learning unit, students are given \$6.09 in

play money and have to spend as much as possible at the café on snacks and drinks without going over budget.

For some students, this activity is their first exposure to using paper money.

"Getting their hands on tangible money is super important," Joyce said. "There's not a lot of money exchanging anymore, so



they don't have a sense of how many quarters are in a dollar."

"We're always trying to come up with a real world activity," Joyce explained.

"You're never going to need a lot of the things I'm going to teach you, but this, everyone will need for the rest of their life."



The students enjoyed the activity where they learned math skills and were on their best behavior. Joyce finds students respond better to lesson plans when there are real world elements involved.

"There's this level of seriousness because it was real – it was real food, real drinks," Joyce said. "How to conduct yourself out in the public is a part of it."



## BHS National Honor Society sparks up their steps in DC



Members of Beacon High School's National Honor Society chapter traveled to Washington, D.C. in late January to build their leadership skills and make connections at the Lead Spark Conference.

It was the first time these students, chaperoned by Sargent Elementary School clerk Meg Calvert-Cason, attended the conference where they heard different perspectives on a range of topics from fundraising efforts to how to be better leaders.

Senior Labibah Hassan enjoyed speaking with students from across the nation who have a likeminded passion for community service and leadership. One breakout session Hassan attended, "Youth as Changemakers: Today and Tomorrow," highlighted how students can make a difference by volunteering, fundraising and spreading awareness about local issues on social media. "They emphasized that anyone can be a leader and that consistency and finding a spark are key to making a difference," Hassan said. "We plan to implement these ideas in our school."



"In Honduras, the public school system is struggling a lot, so these kids in their NHS chapter do a lot of work in the public schools," Cason said. "It was cool understanding their culture."



A highlight of the trip for Junior Ella Cason was meeting students from countries such as Honduras and Costa Rica and hearing about the similarities and differences between their respective Honor Societies.

Calvert-Cason enjoyed accompanying the students on their trip where in addition to the conference, took in many D.C. landmarks including the Supreme Court and the Capitol Building; places she could easily see students taking the skills they learned to affect change.

"They are our future leaders and their voices should be heard in the White House," Calvert-Cason said. "I thought the setting just couldn't have been better."

**2** upcoming fundraising efforts.

**Spring Forward this March: support Beacon's PTSO**

**BULLDOG BEANS**  
From March 21 to April 6, warm up with your favorite brew from Beacon's own **Trax Coffee** and do good with the PTSO. They are offering three varieties in whole bean form or ground for drip. Each one pound bag of whole beans is \$18, \$1 extra for ground.

[You can order from the PTSO's website here.](#)

**Do Good WITH CHIPOTLE**

Fancy a stuffed burrito or maybe tacos from Chipotle? Well why not do so while supporting the PTSO during a fundraising event on **Wednesday, March 22 from 4 to 8 p.m. at Chipotle's Fishkill location at 10 Westage Drive.** Thirty three percent of the event sales will get donated to the cause.

Order online for pickup using the code **GV6ZTDM** or show the attached flyer at the restaurant.

*Anyone interested in the PTSO's mission can follow them on social media on Facebook and Instagram with the handle @bhsptso.*

Produced by Dutchesse BOCES Desiree Gagnon, Graphic Designer and Daniel Zuckerman, Public Information Officer