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District news featuring stories from Tenakill Middle School and Hillside Elementary School

Newsletter

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Trees dedicated

Three trees have been dedicated in Mr. Alfred Baffa's honor this spring. Two trees were planted for the annual Arbor Day celebration at each school. The latest was dedicated at Memorial Park on June 1st. The mayor, the superintendent, parents and friends spoke about how important Mr. Baffa was to our community.



Reading for Rocks

From April 1 - April 18, sixty-five fifth and sixth graders participated in the Read for Rockland Boulders Reading Challenge. These students logged nearly 1000 hours of independent reading during the three-week challenge.

Wounded Warriors Visit

The Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball team took on Closter Recreation to raise awareness for the nation's injured veterans. The vets spoke to the Tenakill students about their time in service and how they handle the challenges of life post injury. One gentleman let the students hold his prosthetic leg as it was passed around the audience. The final score for the game....

Penny Wars for Garden

The TMS Student Council held penny wars during the month of April. Silver money was used against each grade. The funds will be used for a memory garden in honor of Mr. Baffa. The 8th graders were the official penny wars winners, and together the SC raised \$908.70! Student Council is led by Ms. Amanda Cummings and Ms. Ellen Monaghan.

Food Bank Donations

Ms. Leah Cohen and Ms. Janie Marotti are pleased to announce that the HES Student Council held a can drive in the spring. Over 300 cans were donated by the families of Hillside. Not bad for a two day donation window!



Dorney Poetry Winners

Northern Valley students enter a poetry contest every year. The winners read aloud their selections at NVOT in early June. This years winners include:
Gr 3: Liam Walsh, Giovanni Rosario
Gr 4: Aliyah Hochron, William Kin
Gr 5: Allie Lerant, Mohit Kalia
Gr 6: Vanessa Ho, Danielle Stark
Gr 7: Kate Schnall, Robert Evelyn
Gr 8: Marcus Kim, Jacklyn Vandermel

Retiring District Staff Leave Long Legacy

The following six staff members are leaving Closter Public Schools and going on to new adventures:

Ms. Sandra Hirsch, 1st grade teacher, has personally affected the lives about 1000 students, teaching them to read and be good people. At Hillside, Sandy has served as a Miriam Buddy, on so many committees, and is generally such a good person.

Tenakill art teacher, **Ms. JoAnn Puleo** has taught grades 5-8. The tremendous quality of the students' work could be seen at the Belskie Art Museum every spring. She connected with students in unique ways to help their growth as people.

After serving as a lawyer and teacher in NYC, **Ms. Rhonda Starer** joined Tenakill. She retires from teaching 7th grade language arts and leaves with a reputation of excellence and very high standards.

Ms. Janice Kunis retired earlier in the spring. She was a Spanish teacher in Tenakill for more than a dozen years. She had been a teacher in NY State before joining Closter in 2005?

Ms. Cheryl Keast, secretary in the Board office, is also retiring. She is an essential part of the inner workings of Closter Public Schools and will be missed as one of the sweetest members of the staff.

Lastly, **Ms. Joanne Newberry** has been an educator for 45 years. Kindergarten students call her Mrs. Blueberry. She first taught multiple elementary grades in Montgomery County, Maryland, before returning to New Jersey to be a first grade teacher in Haworth. Ms. Newberry served as principal and then superintendent in Haworth before leading Closter in January 2006. She is incredibly proud of her time in Tenakill and Hillside and will greatly miss the Closter community.

Closter Public Schools



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Two HES teachers awarded science grants for classrooms

Congratulations to Ms. Catie Ricca and Ms. Charlene Gerbig, third grade teachers in Hillside, for being awarded nearly \$1000 by the Bergen County Utilities Authority. The teachers applied a few months ago and were notified in June.



The BCUA introduced the Environmental Awareness Challenge Grant Program in 2007 as a way to reinvigorate recycling and environmental awareness in Bergen County schools. This program, now in its 12th year, continues to offer educators in all Bergen County public and private schools the opportunity to apply for grants of up to \$1,000.



6th Graders Reach for the Moon

NASA awarded four Tenakill students as semi-finalists based on their research and essay. The students are

teammates Matthew Wong and Joshua Song and Yahel Raviv and Hayden Kim. Our 6th grade scientists participated in an extension opportunity called "Scientist for a Day," sponsored directly by NASA. Continuing in the tradition started by the Cassini Mission to Saturn, the "Scientist for a Day" program challenges students in grades 5-12 to think like NASA scientists. Students examined spacecraft images of Saturn's moon Enceladus, Saturn's moon Titan, and Jupiter's moon Europa. Students worked collaboratively to choose the moon they thought would be the best destination to return to with another spacecraft in order to learn even more about these amazing worlds. Students compiled their data and compiled extensive research in order to construct a written argument, which they submitted to NASA. All three moons were chosen by Tenakill scientists. Over half of the 6th graders participated in this unique extension opportunity, and we look forward to making this a yearly 6th grade tradition here at Tenakill!



Health and Wellness Fair Take Care at Tenakill



Tenakill Middle School continues to be in the forefront in promoting health and wellness among students from grades five through eight.

The Health and Wellness Fair was led by school counselor, Alexandra Earle, and health/physical education/fitness teacher, Paula Cummings. Earle and Cummings created circuits of physical activities and wellness presentations led by professionals in their fields.

This fair was made possible by generous donations from the Closter PTO as well as from families and local businesses, including ExTech Building Materials, SuperJuice Nation, General Mills, and the Valley Hospital.

The following were presenters at the fair:

- ShopRite of Hillsdale, Dietitian Jaclyn Padovano, R.D. CND
- ShopRite of Emerson, Dietitian Rita Russin, R.D. CND
- Savills, Rick Drescher, Corporate Managing Director
- Laura Abbey, an Ironman triathlete/marathoner and Colavita-Whole Foods sponsored bicycle racer and TMS music teacher. Training bicycle equipment was provided by Ridgewood Cycle Shop.
- Cool Hot Yoga of Cresskill, featuring Lexi Erstling, Lindsay Teshler, Gianna Caridi
- High Exposure Climbing Gym of Northvale, featuring Stephanie Schultz, Chris Moyer, Amaury Hernandez, Ryan Leonardow
- Complete Taekwon-Do of Bergenfield, featuring Grandmaster 8th Dan, Dr. Mark Nathanson
- Japanese Children's Society School of Englewood Cliffs, with jump roping coaches Shohei Kasama and Yoshitaka Kato
- Shehriene Bakhtyar, BS, CHES from Hackensack Meridian Health
- Hope Manuel, physical therapist
- Dr. Kathleen Bente, chiropractor
- Laura Cipullo, R.D. of L'ifestyle Lounge



HES Staff Children Off to College

In a fun quirk, the following staff members at Hillside have their children going off to college this fall as freshmen. It's a larger than usual group! Congrats, parents!

- Ms. Sue Desimini - son, Peter: Rutgers University
- Ms. Kathy Lee - son, Zion: TCNJ
- Ms. Sylvia Jost - son, Christopher: NJIT
- Ms. Dawn Lazzari - son, Nicholas: Syracuse University
- Ms. Wendy Bajakian - son, Nicholas: Clemson University
- Ms. Lisa Pantaleo - son, Michael: Villanova
- Ms. Nicole Alpern - daughter, Eliza: Syracuse University
- Mr. Scott Greene - daughter, Samantha: Emory College
- Ms. Liz Klink - daughter, Mackenzie: University of Cincinnati
- Ms. Becky Dippolito - daughter, Rosie: University of Scranton