



Bulldog

BULLETIN

April 2024

Message from the Superintendent

This latest edition of the Bulldog Bulletin showcases some amazing accomplishments from our students and staff. Several articles feature student empowerment and leadership at high levels.

We also feature our district celebrating our belief that diversity is our strength.

I hope you enjoy this edition!

—Matt Landahl

Rombout Spirit Week has Students Seeing Stars

The Rombout community brought its A-game to the annual Spring Spirit Week, during the week of March 18, where they dressed



up for various themed days.

This year marked the first time students and teachers celebrated

"Famous Friday" where they dressed as celebrities such as Steve Harvey, artist Bob Ross, Adam Sandler and everyone's favorite pop princess Taylor Swift.

Teacher Kimberly Gonzalez, noted that it was Student Council president

Leela Ramdeen's idea to have the famous person day. Gonzalez is an adviser for the council.



"They come up with the ideas and then turn it into reality," Gonzalez said of the council members. "It's fun to see when the kids get into it."

Ramdeen, a seventh grader, noted that spirit week is a chance to fill the halls with joy to relieve stress.

BCSD HONORS REMARKABLE WOMEN



JV FORRESTAL ES

For Women's History Month in March, the school's morning news program interviewed

Forrestal's women educators including Principal Crystal Sessoms-Wiggins and library and media specialist Sarah Coleman, the latter of whom advises the fifth graders who produce the show. One interview aired every Friday in March.

Student Council members Luna Punsoda-Drew and Morgan Jamin pitched the idea to Sessoms-Wiggins, who then asked Coleman and her students to make it a reality. "It's completely student driven," Coleman said. "It's a really special project to get to be a part of."



Students picked the most familiar faces at Forrestal and asked them varied questions, including which historic woman they

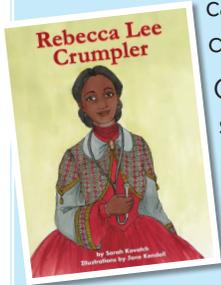
look up to. "It's got a greater reach with some world figures, but then it's also super community focused," Coleman explained. "They're putting us on celebrity status."

For Punsoda-Drew, who anchored the show in early March, interviewing Forrestal staff was an easy decision because they have been her role models.

Punsoda-Drew's family has taught her to respect everyone's rights, regardless of gender or race. "During March, my mom always made sure that I do some kind of project on women's history," she said. "I've learned over time it is pretty important."

SOUTH AVENUE ES

Students in Lisa Biersack's fourth grade class created a display in the hallway outside of their classroom about Rebecca Lee Crumpler, the first African American woman to become a doctor of medicine in the United States. This came with a timeline of important dates in Crumpler's life, a hand drawn portrait of her and props of medical tools.



Crumpler was chosen because Biersack wanted her students to study about an accomplished woman who was not well-known.

Victoria Jimenez Bueso enjoyed writing and learning about Crumpler's accomplishments. "It was amazing to learn about her," Jimenez Bueso said. "We decided to choose the main facts about her."

For Jimenez Bueso learning about historic women is important for one main reason. "They made a huge difference to our lives," she said.

A'myrah Johnson, who made some of the props, most admired Crumpler's determination. "She never gave up on becoming a doctor," Johnson said. "She wanted to help people."



BCSD Student Film Festival is a Cinematic Extravaganza!

Come out and see the works of the district's student filmmakers during the third annual BCSD District Student Film Festival this May.

Students have spent the last month shooting, editing and perfecting their films in anticipation of screening, which will take place on **Friday, May 10th for the elementary films and Saturday and May 11th for the middle and high school submissions.**

All films will be screened at Beacon High School's Seeger Theater.

Film start times and a link to purchase tickets will be made available this month. [Check the Foundation for Beacon School's website](#) for updated information and [click here](#) to see a teaser trailer of our future innovators at work!

Beacon Students Commit to Baseball in College

Six of Beacon's best athletes will continue to hit home runs in baseball after they graduate from BHS. Seniors Ronnie Anzovino, Jackson Atwell, Anthony Borromeo and Mikey Fontaine will play baseball at SUNY Orange, while Jack Antalek and Liam Murphy will do so at Mercy University and SUNY Rockland, respectively.



First baseman Antalek, who will study business, has always dreamed of playing baseball in college and credits the coaching he received from Bobby Atwell and Ryan Koval for making him a successful player. "It's made me such a coachable player," Antalek said of the coaching. "Beacon Baseball sets a standard of excellence and they expect effort over everything."

What Antalek most loves about baseball is the bond he made with his teammates that will last a lifetime. "Team chemistry is one of the most important things you can have," Antalek said. "It's a team game, not an 'I' game." Anzovino, an outfielder, has made plenty of friends during his time on the team and noted that camaraderie is key to being successful.

"It really makes you enjoy the sport more," Anzovino said. "You pick each other up." Anzovino will study business marketing and recommends future athletes stay dedicated to their sport, but also not be so hard on themselves. "Don't beat yourself up too much because there's always another game," Anzovino said.

South Avenue families got a taste of different countries in the form of delicious treats and slideshows as part of a special project in Kelley Bender's third grade class.

Families prepared delicacies such as Israeli pastries called bourekas and Chinese dumplings, while the students shared slideshows in the cafeteria about countries they chose to study about ranging

from France to the Philippines.

"The families have been incredibly generous and accommodating,"

Bender said. "The children enjoy deciding what to make and some help make the items too."

Bender started the project in 2018 after one of her students' parent wanted to cook a meal for the class, prompting other students to

want to help. At the beginning of the school year, students answer a questionnaire about their cultural heritage which Bender uses to guide which countries they study.

This project fits in nicely with New York State's social studies curriculum which suggests third graders study three countries' culture, climate, resources and location in-depth.

Students use graphic organizers, library books and online material to research a country. Bender models how to keep track of research under the different topics and prepare a slideshow with smooth transitions.

"We do two whole class studies and one independent study that results in the slideshows," Bender said.

Cultural Feast is a True Melting Pot



The benefits of this project are plentiful and include improving writing skills, practicing public speaking and becoming more adventurous by trying new foods. Bender

has even heard from former students who remember this project fondly.

"I hope they will recall these memories," Bender said of her former students. "Many stated they were nervous at first, but they were proud of themselves for giving their presentation."

Makyah Halevi presented about the culture of Jamaica, including one aspect she deemed her favorite. My favorite thing about it is the food," Halevi said. "I liked the Jamaican patties."



Glenham Student Showcases Meaning behind Ramadan



Students in Glenham learned about Ramadan in early April, however the lesson did not come from a book. Fourth grader Sara Saeed, accompanied by special education teacher Fathima Ansar, presented basic facts about Ramadan to various classes in the weeks leading up to Eid al-Fitr, marking the end of the monthlong

dawn-to-sunset fast that occurs during this holiday. She enhanced the experience by wearing a hijab, a head covering worn by Muslim women, and teaching some words in Arabic.

While Saeed can eat before the sun rises and after it sets, she explained why her family fasts. We fast because there are people who don't have food and water and we are thankful," Saeed said.

She was initially nervous to present, but would gladly do it again. "It makes me feel happy that other people can learn about it," Saeed said.

Saeed's teacher Danielle Yeaple noticed her not eating during lunch one day and suggested that she share about the holiday with her fellow students. "It is more beneficial to hear from a fellow student who is living through the experience," Yeaple said of explaining Ramadan to students. "She's living it and she's proud of it."

Yeaple was impressed by Saeed who wrote the presentation singlehandedly, kept track of where and when she had to present and did so professionally.

"I was very proud of her," Yeaple said of Saeed. "She answered all the questions audience members would ask."



Softball Fundraiser Gets Community HOPPIN'

When BHS varsity softball coach Catie Oriani was thinking of ways to fundraise for her team this spring, she went an egg-stra step.

Early on Easter morning, 12 of Oriani's athletes dropped off 1,200 colorful eggs filled with candy on the lawns of local families who ordered them as part of the "Egg My Yard" fundraiser. They earned \$1,100 to go towards new equipment such as bats, catchers gear and personalized hoodies.

"They paired up and went to all the different houses," Oriani said. "They met me at the high school at 5am; they were up and ready to go."

Families were also given "Beacon Softball" T-shirts as a way for the team to connect with the community. Oriani found that families responded positively to the fundraiser with some requesting she do it again next year. "When the community sees us in different places, then they're more likely to come to a game or maybe enroll their kid," Oriani said. "We had such good feedback."

When senior Shy'anne Kush first learned her team would participate, she was excited because she had how other schools have done something similar.

"I never got to do it myself," Kush said. "I think it's a unique idea and other schools have done it, so far us to do it too is really cool." Junior Katherine Ruffy felt this unique fundraiser was more effective at creating awareness about the team and earning money than just manning a table at an event.

"It seemed very interesting because I've never done a fundraiser like this before," Ruffy said. "It was very fun hiding eggs, especially with my friends."



Students Thrive at In-Class Jobs

It's all work and some play in Julie Duffy's fourth grade class at Forrestal.

The teacher has her kids working seven in-class "jobs," which include secretary, who answers the classroom phone; librarian, computer technician, who helps fellow classmates with technology issues, messenger, and space manager, who puts furniture back and reminds everyone to tidy up.

Duffy was inspired by other Beacon teachers whose students have done something similar and initially it involved her selecting students for roles using craft sticks. However, students were not as excited about having jobs assigned to them, prompting Duffy to change her approach.

"I decided that the kids should be able to advocate for themselves and aim for a job that interests them," Duffy said. "Although they are only in fourth grade, it is important that they learn about the real world and responsibilities."

Every month, students fill out an "application" on Google Classroom that includes basic information, if they held a job the previous month or not and

selecting two jobs they are interested in. While everyone does not get a job, students can apply again the following month.

Duffy's favorite part of the application was when students write why they are best suited for a job because they are forced to think about their positive attributes in a different way.

"This section would be comparable to the interview process in the real world and I am even toying with the idea of having real 'interviews' next year," Duffy explained. "It's really special to see them saying kind words about themselves and realizing that they have so many unique skills."

Duffy finds that her kids enjoy the responsibilities they are given.

"It encourages them to participate in the success of the class ecosystem as well as prepare for real world responsibilities they will ultimately have," Duffy said.

Nicholas Ferris previously served as librarian and secretary and has

enjoyed the experience. "It will help me learn how to do more stuff," Ferris said. "It's a lot of fun and you get to do this every month."

