



What's Right with Spackenkill!

December 16, 2016

Spackenkill Union Free School District

A tradition of excellence with a vision for tomorrow

Dear Spackenkill Families,

It is with great enthusiasm that I would also like to add a shout-out to Geri Vasely and Elizabeth Schwoerer for being selected as Field Hockey Coach of the Year and Player of the Year, respectively. Mrs. Vasely actually worked with me for a period of time when she filled a substitute high school secretarial position at John Jay, and I know first-hand what an enthusiastic and energetic person she is. Secondly, kudos to LEO Club and their advisor, Adam Hammond, for their dedication to our Adopt-a-Family program. In 1969 as a senior at Islip High School I became one of the first charter members of the LEO Club, so it's so great to see how this organization has prospered over time. I'm also proud of the work with coding that's occurring throughout the District and is showcased in the article concerning Computer Science Education Week. Todd Student Government is at it again, engaging our community with another fantastic event with our senior citizens. Good work guys and advisor Norma Vazquez! Finally, thank you STA for the great holiday party, bringing us together at this really important time of the year.

Next week we're going to showcase the music program and the fantastic holiday performances across the District.

Sincerely,

Mark Villanti, Ed.D.

Interim/Acting Superintendent



Coach and Player of the Year

The Field Hockey team just scored two more wins! Field Hockey Coach (and Principal's Secretary) **Geri Vasely** has been named *Poughkeepsie Journal's* Coach of the Year! Mrs. Vasely has been coaching field hockey for 12 years (Varsity Coach for five years, and prior to that, modified and JV). She plans to retire from the position following this fall season, so this honor is well timed. In 2012, she was named Section 9 Coach of the Year. Additionally, field hockey goalie **Elizabeth Schwoerer**, a junior, has been named 2016 Player of the Year. Elizabeth had a 92.9 save rate, with 114 saves this past fall and only 8 goals scored against her—and that does not even include the post-season. "She had an absolutely phenomenal season," said Mrs. Vasely. "She used to play on the field as a forward and stepped up when I needed a goalie last year, and she has surpassed any expectations and never looked back. She is a powerhouse in the net." Congratulations!

LEO Club Update



The LEO club will be accepting donations of new items and gift cards until this Monday, December 19 for Adopt-a-Family. The club has gift trees and a collection box in every building. Last year LEO Club helped 32 of our District's neediest families through the generosity of our Spackenkill community, said club advisor Adam Hammond. This year, the Town Policemen's Benevolent Association (PBA) provided a very generous box of food for our "adopted" families, which includes, among other things, a turkey and all the fixings. LEOs will help them pack the boxes after school on December 20th. On November 9 LEO Club also supplied and served food to 200 people at the Dutchess Outreach Lunch Box.



Above: LEO Club students prepare holiday donations for district families. Left Inset: Adopt-a-Family tree in the Hagan lobby.

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Computer Science Education Week



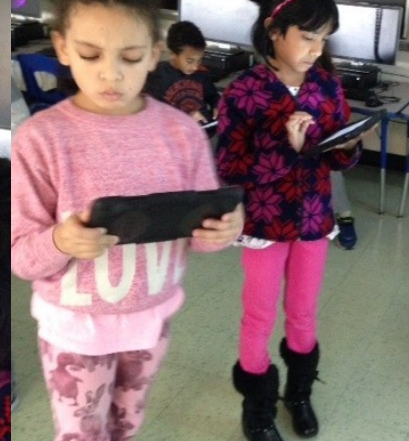
Above: Mrs. Karen Vitek's high school classes celebrated Computer Science Education Week (December 5-11) by participating for the fourth consecutive year in the Hour of Code. Students expanded their coding knowledge with projects in Java, JavaScript, and mobile app development.

Above middle and right: Nassau Computer Club (aka iPad Club) marked Hour of

Code with Lightbot, an app for beginning programming designed for iPhone and iPad. Teachers Anna-Maria Van Etten and Laura Agaard helped students get hooked on coding. The club began during the 2014-15 school year and meets on select



Wednesdays during recess so that all students have access to the club. In the pictures, you will notice that the students are standing as they try to determine which way to maneuver a robot that they will



then program to move along a particular path, lighting up select squares along the way. "Our goal is to provide a setting where children are encouraged to work together to design, create, and try new things using iPads," said Mrs. Agaard. "Students are encouraged to learn from and share with each other."

Many families take advantage of the holiday breaks to travel to someplace warm and tropical. This year the Zika virus has been in the news due to outbreaks in many of those warm and tropical locations. If you are planning to escape this winter here is some information to keep in mind:

Holiday Travel Message to the Community from Joan Dwyer, RN, Spackenkill High School Nurse

Zika is transmitted by mosquito bites. Prevention is key and you should take precautions to prevent being bitten. Long sleeves and pants as well as the use of mosquito repellent will give you a layer of protection.

Check out <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/zika> for more information.

Symptoms of Zika include fever, rash, muscle and joint pain, headache, and red eyes. Symptoms can last several days to a week. A blood test is done for diagnosis. There is no medication for Zika at this time. If you become symptomatic upon your return visit your physician and report that you have been out of the country.

For additional information visit <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/visit-family-friends-area-with-zika>

Senior Citizens Holiday Breakfast

On December 9, Todd Student Government hosted senior citizens from the Spackenkill community at a holiday breakfast. The Todd Jazz Band (*pictured near right*), directed by Victor Catanzaro, provided musical entertainment for 37 guests. Poinsettias and cookies were raffle prizes. "Everybody had a wonderful time," said advisor Norma Vazquez.



Message Regarding SchoolMessenger Updates

The SchoolMessenger notification system provides timely communication to parents and staff members on such matters as weather-related closings and delays, attendance, general-interest activities, and district emergencies.

We have updated SchoolMessenger to receive parent/guardian email addresses in addition to the home phone number. You should have received a letter in early December providing personalized instructions on how to create a SchoolMessenger account if you don't already have one. With a SchoolMessenger account you can customize your contact preferences by adding phone numbers and emails. You can also opt out of calls or emails by unchecking the message types.

Emergency | Attendance | AM Closings/Delays | General | PM Dismissals | Survey

At this time we do not utilize the Survey message type. We encourage all families to set up a SchoolMessenger account so we can be contact you in the manner you prefer most.

STA Holiday Party



A big thank you to Kim Sottile (second from right) for organizing the successful District Holiday Party on December 9!

Mission:
Inspired by a tradition of excellence and a spirit of continuous improvement, the Spackenkill School District will provide all of our students with the academic and social skills necessary to pursue their goals and become responsible citizens in an interdependent global community.

Please email newsletter submissions and ideas to Mary Forsell at mary.forsell@sufsdny.org
Issues of the newsletter are available on the Spackenkill website:
www.spackenkillschools.org

Vision:
All Spackenkill graduates will be lifelong learners who are inspired to pursue their dreams and contribute to the global society.