

Please see flyer(s) below that might be of interest:

[DCC Songwriting Camp](#)



*What's Right with  
Spackenkill!*

*June 8, 2018*

*A tradition of  
excellence with a vision  
for tomorrow*

Dear Spackenkill Community,

This newsletter is intended to highlight positive news across the district and sometimes bring information to your attention that worries us. The rising use of electronic cigarettes is a concern. Below is an excerpt from a newsletter that I read today:

### **The Rise of Vaping**

A new health risk is on the horizon for American teens. Teenagers have taken a device meant to help adults stop smoking and turned it into a new bad habit, reports [Jia Tolentino on the New Yorker](#).



Estimates suggest that this year the American vaporizer market will grow to five and a half billion dollars. That's a fraction of the cigarette market in this country, (120 billion dollars), but it's especially troublesome in high-end ZIP codes. A vaporizer for JUUL can cost about \$35, while four flavored pods (your choice of 8, including mango, mint, and cucumber) costs another \$16.

Smoking cigarettes kills nearly 500,000 in the U.S. annually (nearly 38 times the number killed by guns). Vaping may lead to smoking cigarettes and, according to a former chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics Tobacco Consortium, "is already a massive public-health disaster--and without dramatic action it's going to get much, much, much worse."

I am writing because we have observed an increase in usage of this device as early as sixth grade this school year. The possession or use of vaping equipment will result in

an automatic suspension and parental notification. Years ago I viewed a film called *Coach*. I recall as if it were yesterday the words, "It's not the last cigarette that killed me. It was the first." My parents were chain smokers when I was a kid. To this day I hate the smell of tobacco. Here is a link that you can check out from the American Cancer Association that provides facts on the health risks of vaping:

<https://www.cancer.org/latest-news/surgeon-general-calls-e-cigarettes-dangerous-to-young-people.html>.

Thank you, Hagan staff and families who encouraged their children to become involved with the after-school running program. I was amazed how many children participated in and completed the race at Vassar despite the heat and humidity.

Another highlight of my week was attending the Middle School National Junior Honor Society Induction. Listening to the short bios of students as they received their recognition was inspiring. Kudos to the three students who are thinking about future careers in teaching! Anyone who attended the high school Science Symposium left highly impressed with the scholarly work of our students and teachers. Well done!

Finally, roofing work at Nassau and Hagan is starting up. We have to begin early in the year to ensure finishing before the start of next school in the fall. Staging of materials requires use of some areas of each school, which may cause some inconvenience to you, but we have no choice. I can't wait to begin Phase 2 of the project next year and steer these needed improvements to their conclusion!

My best,



Mark Villanti, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## ***Hagan Runners Conquer 5K***

The Junior Spartans Running Team completed their 5K Run at Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve in Poughkeepsie last Friday. After training for weeks in all kinds of weather,

60 students completed the course. Times ranged from 24 minutes to just under one hour. Wonderful job! And thank you to the teachers who helped them train and volunteers who encouraged them on a hot and sticky day!



[CLICK HERE FOR PHOTOS FROM THE RUN](#)

## ***Science Symposium Is Biggest Yet***

The 12th Annual Science Research Symposium at Spackenkill High School on May 29th brought together more science presenters than ever before: A total of 26 students participated. Ten seniors and one junior presented PowerPoints, and the other 15 students presented posters. Guest speaker Dr. Justin Hubert, an assistant professor of

Cognitive Psychology at Bard College, provided the opening remarks.

Student speakers were Jessica Cohen, Ian Nevers, Vasvi Bhutani, Adele Long, Anya Justin, Nyi-rein Kyaw, Alex Ristic, Isabel Hammond, and Sharon "Grey" Devlin. Thank you to science research teachers Ms. Chen, Mrs. Maloney, and Mrs. Matts for their guidance.

[Please click here to read the program.](#)



## *Leo Club Sets Up Camp*

On the weekend of May 19-20, 51 Leo Club members went on a service/camping trip to Camp Wa Wa Segowea in Massachusetts. The camp name may be familiar to long-term Poughkeepsie residents. The land it sits on was donated by the Smiths of Smith Brothers cough drop fame and was affiliated with the Poughkeepsie YMCA from 1913 until the Y closed in the early 1990s. The camp is celebrating its 90th year serving children seven to 17 years old. Today it is an independent nonprofit whose volunteers keep it running.

This year Leos performed over 200 hours of service and were rewarded with a classic summer camp experience in beautiful surroundings with amazing food. Even working in the rain and the cold didn't dampen spirits. All students who volunteered on the trip said they are looking forward to next year.

It has been an exciting and landmark year for Spackenkill Leo Club: The organization is celebrating its 45th year and has set new records for service hours performed by November (1,000) and percent of students in the school involved in Leo club (31%, over 150 members). A record number of students met the 10 hours of service goal as well (65).



## *HS Senior Excels at BOCES CTI Program*

Junior Amir Marji, a student at BOCES Career and Technical Institute (CTI) in



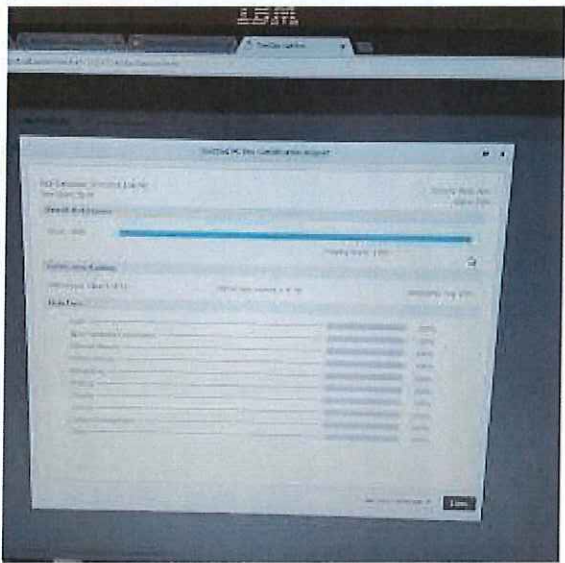
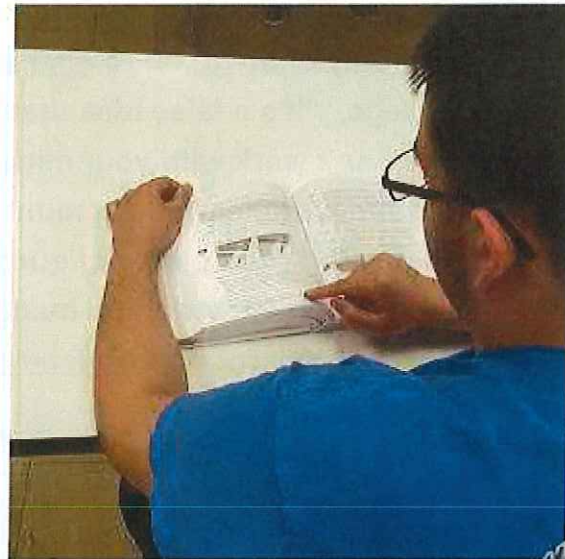
the Computer Hardware course of the Information Technology program, recently achieved a perfect score of 2000 on his Testout PC Pro Certification Report. He is number one in his Computer Hardware class and ranks in the top 10% nationally. Amir recalls that he first learned of the BOCES program on

a 10th grade tour. Originally, he was trying to decide between computers and graphic design—and he chose computers as a result of the tour. “I am very glad I did,” says Amir. The program began with learning the basic parts of computer—students took them apart, cleaned them, and put them back together again. Then they started learning content in-depth with Testout PC Pro. The students had capstone exercises covering topics like video and audio that were practice for the culminating certification report. “It’s very similar to how the Regents works,” says Amir. “Not only do you need to understand the content but also how they’re asking the question.” Amir appreciates course instructor John Jacobs, who shares his experience in the field with his students.

As a senior in the upcoming school year, Amir will take Computer Networking and learn about servers, troubleshooting procedures, and internet security, among many other topics. His goal is to earn the New York State Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Credential. This credential requires students to complete 216 hours of Career and Technical Education and 54 hours of Work Based Learning (WBL) during their high school careers.

Amir observes that all students in the program are developing in specialized areas. While one of his friends has expertise in screen replacement, Amir feels his greatest strength is software, what you need to operate a computer. “One important thing in the field is keeping current—nothing is going to stay the same,” he says. “There is new technology coming out and one thing we’re learning about is security in the workplace—phishing emails, fake websites, and what could make your company open to attack.” He sees himself down the road in a corporate environment, possibly as a freelancer like his uncle in the tech industry.

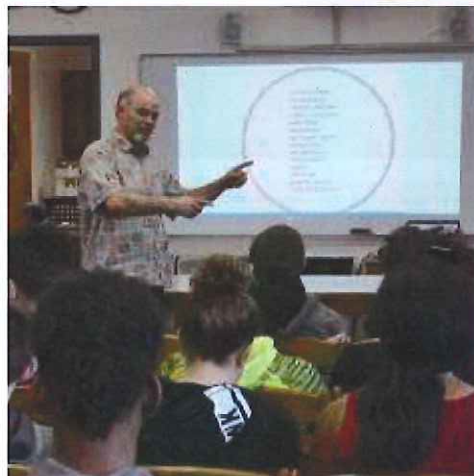
*Amir is pictured above with Spackenkill HS Principal Steve Malkischer and Guidance Counselor Kathleen DeFreest. He is pictured below in action at BOCES. One photo shows a screen shot of his perfect score.*



## ***8th Graders Learn About Career Programs***

It was an eye-opening experience for 8th graders at Todd Middle School on May 18th when they learned about opportunities at Dutchess BOCES Career and Technical Institute (CTI). Two presenters from the program, school counselor Kirstin Litwin and English teacher Harrison Barritt, spoke with students about

possibilities of attending BOCES in 11th and 12th grades. Students learned about the many offerings, from graphic design to small engine technology to cosmetology and culinary arts, which involves working with a professional oven. Students in the program can go out into the real world with working resumes, and they often go on to additional technical training and/or college. "It's a false idea that you work with your hands because you can't work with your mind," said Mr. Barritt. "All of these jobs require a tremendous amount of intelligence and thinking." Students asked plenty of questions and then went on a virtual tour of BOCES via a film made by students in the video/film production program. [To learn more about BOCES CTI, please click here to visit the website.](#)







The National Junior Honor Society Induction Ceremony for the Orville A. Todd Middle School Chapter took place on May 31st. Congratulations to the inductees!

[Click here for more information about NJHS and the names of the inductees.](#)

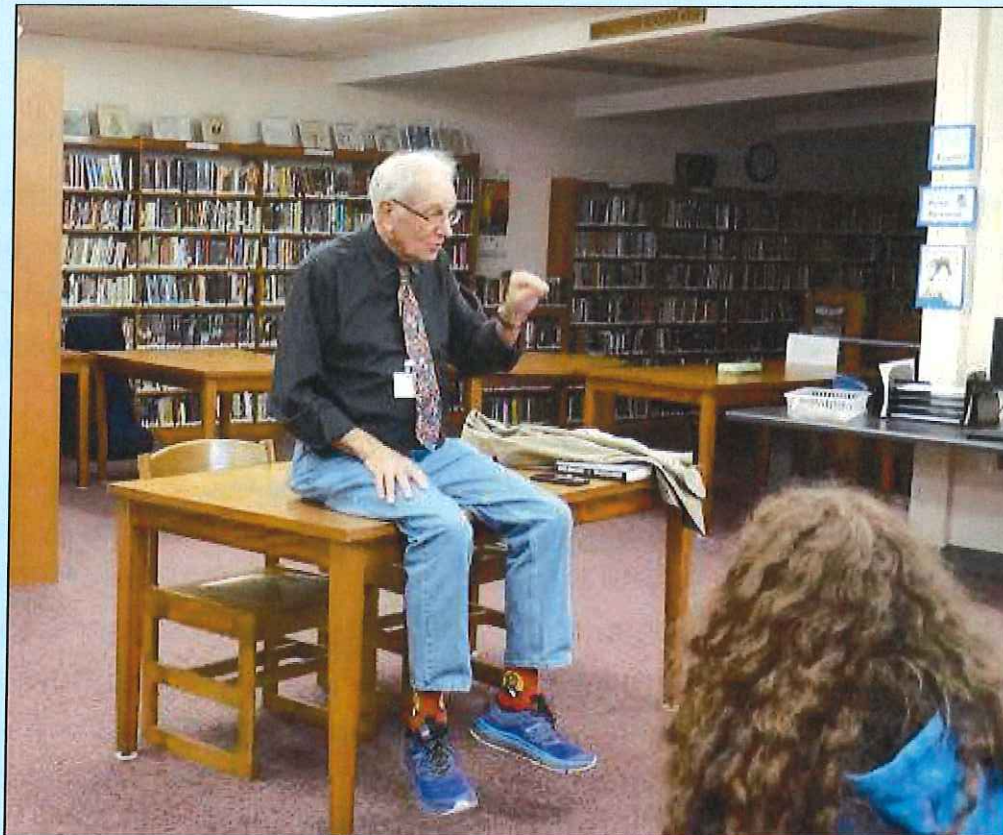
[Click here for the NJHS Program.](#)



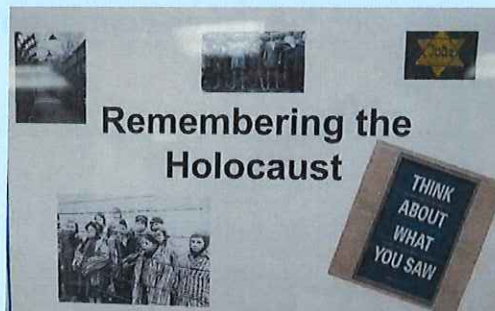
## *Holocaust Survivor Tells His Story*

Eighth grade students recently welcomed Dr. Alex Levy, a Holocaust survivor who was hidden in a Catholic girls' orphanage in Belgium for three years during World War II. Dr. Levy, a retired English teacher (who at one time spoke no English), was back in the classroom on Thursday, May 31, easily capturing our students' attention as he brought to life his story and the atmosphere of fear in WWII Europe for all people, but particularly for Jews.

Having to change his name at an early age and pretend he was Catholic, Dr. Levy remained safe thanks to the generosity of a Cardinal who quietly opened the doors of a Catholic orphanage to Jewish children in Nazi-occupied Brussels. Dr. Levy shared one of his favorite sayings: "Better to be lucky than smart, although smart is nice, too." He stressed to his young audience that although they



will hear many Holocaust survivor stories, no two stories are the same. “All survivors’ stories share one similar element and that is a Christian with a conscience, and the guts to do something about it, helped them survive.” Students were able to make many connections from their recent visit to the Museum of Jewish Heritage, as Dr. Levy had friends who were on the St. Louis and others who were saved by the Kindertransport, rescue efforts to bring refugee children from Nazi Germany to Great Britain, both featured exhibits at the museum.



Thank you to Elyse Joy, a friend of Dr. Levy’s since he was a teacher in her high school; her connection has enabled our students the gift of hearing first-hand Holocaust survivor testimony, which becomes more valuable as with time we gradually lose these first-person accounts.

## ***Eggcellent Experiments***

Second graders in Mrs. Zanca's and Mrs. Wilcox's classes took on the challenge of designing contraptions that prevent chicken eggs from breaking or cracking from a high fall. By their very nature, chicken eggs are surely strong and can withstand up to 100 pounds of weight, however their shells can crack when met with a sudden impact.

Students used straws, cotton balls, tape, Styrofoam, cardboard tubes, and plastic bags to create their egg protectors. Working in teams, they had a total of 50 minutes from start to finish to design and build their models. At the end of the time limit, the teams went outside to perform the "egg drop." Each contraption was dropped from the same starting height and if it survived the fall with egg intact, it was dropped from an even greater height for a total of three tries. Teams recorded their results in a chart and later discussed reasons for the outcome. Many survived the first fall from 45 inches and went on to a 69-inch fall. Three contraptions protected eggs from heights of 84 inches!



15 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie, NY

(845) 463-7800

**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.

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

**[Please submit story ideas to mary.forsell@sufsdny.org](mailto:mary.forsell@sufsdny.org)**

Issues of the newsletter are available on the **[Spackenkill website:](http://www.spackenkillschools.org/district_newsletter_archive)**  
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