



## A Message from the Spackenkill Superintendent



### One District, Multiple Paths to Excellence

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December 6, 2024

Dear Spackenkill Community,

Over the Thanksgiving weekend, the District shared the sad news that we have lost one of the members of our school family, Matthew Darcy, a 2024 graduate. He is the son of Hagan teacher Jen Darcy.

The Spackenkill School District Board of Education extends its sincerest condolences to the Darcy family and the many people who have been affected by this tragedy. The Board understands that this loss is raising many emotions for our entire school district and wants our community to know that the District has protocols in place to help support the mental health of our students and staff. Our social workers and school psychologists have been available throughout the week to talk with any student or staff member who may be having a particularly difficult time dealing with the news. There is nothing wrong with asking for this help.

Thank you to those who extended their sympathies to the family. Our Spackenkill community can always be relied upon to help and comfort those in need.

Our thoughts are with the Darcy family and all those affected by this tragedy now and in the difficult weeks ahead.

[For visitation and funeral information, as well as to send condolences to the family, please visit this link.](#)



*Above: A chair with a trumpet resting on the seat in remembrance of Matthew Darcy at Monday night's winter concert.*

# *Adopt a Family for the Holidays*



The LEO Club thanks everyone who has already donated to Adopt a Family. As you know, we are asking for new items (from diamonds on giving trees in school lobbies), gifts of cash, or gift cards to grocery or department stores. Gifts of any amount are greatly appreciated and will be added with others to help make a difference in the lives of community members in need.

We will accept donations until **2 pm on Friday, December 13th.**

Thank you and Happy Holidays!

## **NYSCATE Conference**

Last week, Assistant Superintendent John Farrell, Technology integration teacher Marcella Byrne, and Hagan teachers Kim Scoralick, Kate Stout, Maureen Wishrad, and Brian Alwick attended the 24th Annual New York State Association for Computers and Technologies in Education (NYSCATE) Conference. NYSCATE is a non-profit professional organization representing technology-using educators and administrators.

Over 120 presentations by teachers and technology experts were given over the three-day period. Among presentation topics were STEM in Ed: Engaging Middle Schoolers in Computer Science, The Human Intelligence Movement: Igniting Human Potential for our AI World, Embracing an Inclusive Mindset Through Accessible Technology, and Amplifying Student Voices: The Power of Content Creation in Education

The featured keynote speaker was Josh Reynolds, National Director for Modern Workplace at Microsoft. Mr. Reynolds leads a team dedicated to helping K-12 schools, higher education institutions, and academic medical centers across the U.S.



*Above, left to right: Brian Alnwick, Maureen Wishrad, Marcella Byrne, John Farrell, Kim Scoralick, and Kate Stout at the NYSCATE Conference last week.*

**Athletics News**



Every Varsity Fall Sports Team received the NYSPHSAA Scholar Athlete Team Award. To receive this recognition, the team's average GPA for 75% of the roster must be 90% or higher. Congratulations to our athletes, coaches, and teachers!

**NYS Scholar Athlete Teams**

Girls Tennis

Girls Soccer

Volleyball

Girls Swim

Boys Soccer

Cross Country

Football

Golf

**Soccer News**

Davis Barnes was selected to the 2024 NYS Small School All-State Team by the United Soccer Coaches Association. Davis is the 13th player in program history to be selected and the second year in a row that Spackenkill had an All-State player. Dylan Updike was recognized for this honor last season. Congratulations, Davis Barnes and Coach Cross!



*Above: Davis Barnes on the field.*

### **Spartan Basketball Madness**

The Basketball Booster Club held its annual Spartan Madness event on December 3rd to kick off the Boys and Girls Basketball and Cheerleading seasons. The Modified, JV, and Varsity teams were recognized and community members had opportunities to play contests and win prizes. This

event was planned and organized by Anita Hoyt and our Booster Club volunteers. Thank you for providing such a great night for our student-athletes and community!



Above: Our basketball and cheerleading teams.



*Above, left to right: Student Lilah Hoyt, who is a member of our Modified Girls Basketball Team, with Sparty and Booster Club President Anita Hoyt.*



*Above: Spectators enjoyed basketball scrimmages.*



*Above: Our cheerleaders performed lively routines.*

### **Winter Concerts**

This week, SHS Concerts #1 and #2 took place, as well as 7th/8th Grade Concert #1. Enjoy a few moments from rehearsals for these concerts.



Two photos above: Seventh and eighth grade band in rehearsal last week.



Click [here](#) or on the video above to watch 7th/8th Grade Band rehearsing with Mr. Vila.



Click [here](#) or on the video above to watch SHS Band rehearsing with Mr. Vila.



Above: Concert Choir in rehearsal last week.



Click [here](#) or on the video above to watch Concert Choir sing accompanied by Mr. Maiorana.





*Two photos above: Mrs. Kaczynski conducts the Spackenkill High School Orchestra.*



Click [here](#) or on the video above to watch HS Orchestra rehearsing with Mrs. Kaczynski.

### **Inspired by Nature**

Mrs. Romani and Mr. Romani hosted Todd Family Art Night last month. This is a district-wide event that is always a lot of fun for students and their parents and guardians. During the evening, families used preserved plants representative of the Hudson Valley to decorate clay bowls. Another event is planned for February, so stay tuned.









*Four photos above:* Families had a great time making clay bowls impressed with preserved leaves and flowers.

### **Changing It Up**

Mrs. Strapec's students have been learning about reversible and irreversible physical changes in science class. Using clay and toothpicks, the students built and rebuilt structures to explore how objects made of small pieces can be taken apart and made into new objects. They loved this lesson!





*Collages above:* Second graders created reversible physical changes.

**Hagan Holiday Shoppe**

The Elementary PTA sponsored a Holiday Shoppe at Hagan this week. Students chose gifts for friends and family, checking off their lists and staying within their budgets. Members of the PTA assisted them while shopping and also provided a gift-wrap station. Thank you to the Elementary PTA members for making this event possible year after year.



*Two photos above:* Students carefully consider the gift possibilities.



*Two photos above:* PTA members at the gift-wrapping station. Students check their lists.

### **Students Unlock Escape Rooms**

Mr. Merrill's fifth graders recently participated in an escape room activity. The escape room is a digital form through which students solve multiplication of decimals problems. Then the students use their answers to manipulate and find the unlock code. This is an enrichment activity that students do solo and in teams to push beyond fifth grade content. It gets them thinking in abstract ways about math and really inspires them to apply what they've been taught.



Above: Mr. Merrill demonstrates a digital escape room for Dr. Fanuele.



Above: A student applies math to unlock an escape room.



**NYSED Digital Resource Survey**



Spackenkill Union Free School District is assisting the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in collecting data related to student internet and digital device access at home. Both the District and NYSED are committed to ensuring digital equity for every student in our community

and across the state. This data will be collected annually to help identify technology needs and target resources and funding opportunities when they become available.

Your participation is important!

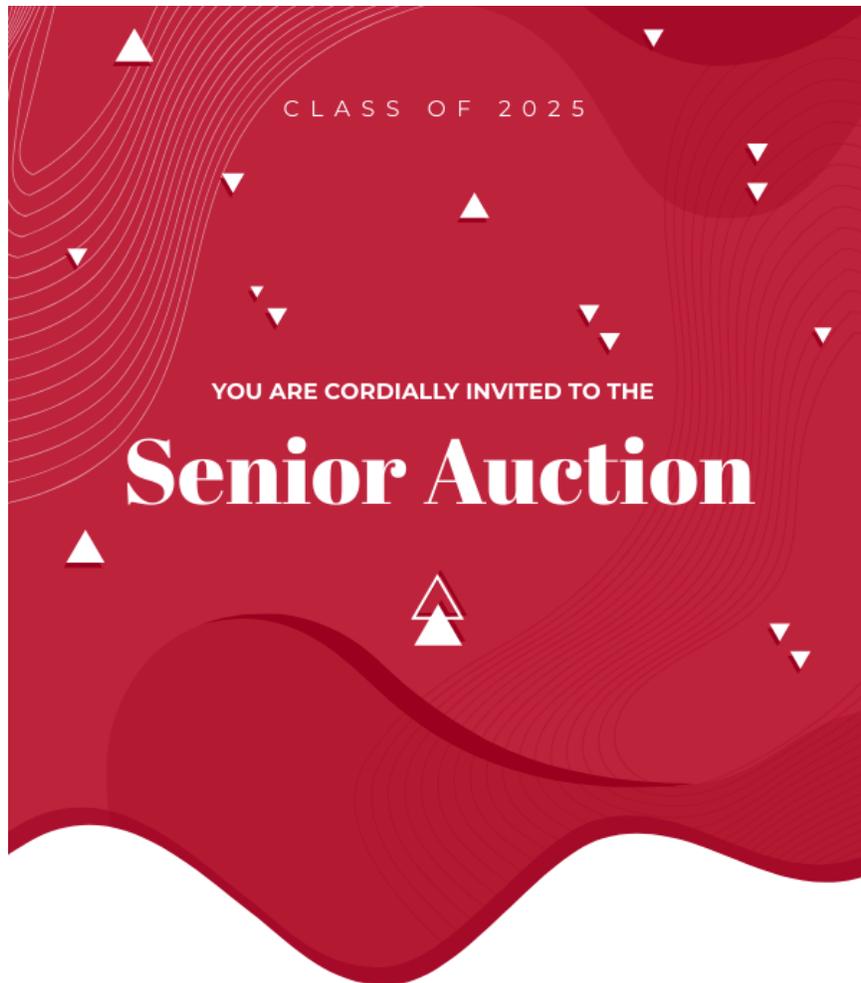
Here's what you need to know:

- Beginning Monday, October 21, the survey will be emailed to you with a link for each child in your household.
- Watch for the email from Spackenkill with the subject line 2024-2025 School Year: Digital Resource Survey.
- The survey is brief and takes about 1 minute to complete.
- The survey will be emailed to you regularly until you complete it for each child.

Please complete the survey for each child by Tuesday, December 10.

Click [here](#) for more information.

**TONIGHT!**



***Friday, December 6th, 6:30pm at the High School***

Start your holiday shopping and support the class of 2025! We will have a tons of wonderful items donated by shops and restuarants in the Spackenkill community. Please join us for a fun evening!

## Spartans Softball Skills Clinic



Spackenkill softball program players and coaches will be running softball skill stations that will focus on the following skills: throwing, catching, batting, fielding and baserunning.

All proceeds from the skills clinic will go towards the Spackenkill softball program.

### **Clinic Details**

**Dates:** December 21 and 22

**Location:** Nassau Elementary School

**Times:**

- Grades K-2: 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM
- Grades 3-6: 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

**Cost:**

- One day \$30
- Two days \$50

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### **Permission Slip & Payment**

I give my child \_\_\_\_\_ permission to attend the Spartans Softball Clinic for grades \_\_\_\_\_. My child will be attending the following day/s:

\_\_\_\_\_.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Forms of payment are cash or check (checks can be made payable to Spackenkill Booster Club attn: Spackenkill Softball) Permission slips and payment is due no later than December 11, 2024. Payments can be sent to, or dropped off at Hagan Elementary School, 42 Hagan Drive, Poughkeepsie NY 12603 (attn: Stephen Merrill)

For questions contact: Coach Stephen Merrill email: [stephen.merrill@sufsdny.org](mailto:stephen.merrill@sufsdny.org)

[Download and print Soccer Permission and Payment Form Here](#)



**Croft Corners Fire Company has received word from the North Pole that Santa will be in town on Sunday, December 15 and has asked us to escort him around.**

**Santa will be at the following locations:**

(times are not exact and are subject to change)

**Crown Heights Clubhouse: 12 pm**  
(South Road Civic Association)

**Nassau Rd Elementary School: 12:30 pm**

**Hagan Elementary School: 1 pm**

**Todd Middle School: 1:30 pm**

**Field Court: 2 pm**



**Town of Poughkeepsie**  
**Holiday Caravan**  
Saturday, December 7, 2024  
4pm Line-Up  
4:30pm Step Off

We're excited to announce the Holiday Caravan will be happening once again this year. We'll be lining up at the NYS DOT building adjacent to the TOP Highway Garage at 4pm. The caravan will head down Raymond Ave → Rt. 376 → Pleasant Ln. → Alda Dr. → Spackenkill Rd → Millbank Rd. → Hagan Dr. → Spackenkill Rd. → IBM Rd. → W. Dogwood Dr. → Briarwood Dr. → Marwood Dr. → Nassau Rd. → S. Gate Dr. → Sheafe Rd. → Galleria Mall

→ Contact Mike Simon Highway Superintendent:  
(845) 264-0573

**Holiday Wreath Fundraiser with Lynch Creek Farm**



The Class of 2027 is partnering with **\*\*Lynch Creek Farm\*\*** for our holiday wreath fundraiser! Lynch Creek offers beautiful, high-quality wreaths, centerpieces, mini trees, and other holiday gifts. These items can be shipped anywhere in the United States, and every purchase supports the Class of 2027. Click [here](#) or on the image above to visit their website.

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Our hallways are getting more festive every day!

Sincerely,

Paul M. Fanuele, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools



Please see flyer(s) that may be of interest:

[Senior Auction](#)

[Spartans Softball Clinic](#)

[Croft Corners Santa Run](#)

[Town of Poughkeepsie Holiday Caravan](#)

[Class of 2027 Holiday Fundraiser](#)

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**Spackenkill Union Free School District**

**15 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603; 845-463-7800**

*Established 1865*