

Generosity of “book angels” results in new, monthly books for each Munn first grader

A teacher’s social media post last August, asking friends and family to consider sponsoring a student as a “book angel” for the school year, led to such an overwhelming response that every student in the *entire* first grade had a sponsor.

Munn Elementary School teacher Alexis Wiedemer posted the request, which said, “Each month I receive scholastic book order forms for my students. Some students cannot afford to purchase new books. As first graders, they are just making their marks as readers and are so eager to read new things! How cool would it be for each student to receive one free book every month at no cost to his/her family? For \$9 per child (\$1 book/month), would anyone be interested

in sponsoring a child in my class? Those sponsors would be called “Book Angels.””

By mid-September, all three first-grade classes received their first books of the year. Mrs. Wiedemer, Mrs. DiCicco and Mrs. Lonardo explained the gift, then presented each student with a book to keep. The first graders then created thank you cards for their “Book Angels”.

“I really didn’t know what to expect, so was amazed by the generous response,” Wiedemer said. “I just cannot thank everyone enough. It means so much, and the students will certainly enjoy a new book every month.”

“I just cannot thank everyone enough. It means so much, and the students will certainly enjoy a new book every month.”

Munn Elementary School teacher Alexis Wiedemer



Calling all of our alumni!

Are you an alumni of the Spencerport Central School District?

We would love to connect with you.

Superintendent Dan Milgate has announced a 2019-20 initiative to build upon our alumni relations, and would like to begin by hosting a series of alumni luncheons in the coming months.

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Superintendent's Message

Dear Community,

November provides a great opportunity to reflect upon the events of the past year, and express our appreciation for our family, friends and colleagues. As you know, Spencerport's theme for 2019-20 is gratitude, and I have been humbled by the power of gratitude demonstrated around our district. Please join us this year in celebrating all that we have to be thankful for and the great things we do collectively as a school community, by:

- recognizing our volunteers and staff through the Spencerport Stars appreciation program http://www.spencerportschools.org/departments_and_programs/human_resources/spencerport_stars
- using the hashtag #GratefulRangers or #GratitudeAttitude in your social media posts (check out the gratitude pumpkin carved by Munn teacher Danielle Powers)
- sending a handwritten note to someone to express your appreciation.

These simple gestures mean more than you will ever know, and are often kept as keepsakes throughout our professional careers.

Speaking of careers and gratitude, I would like to publicly extend my appreciation and congratulations to Principal Carol Robinson, who has announced her plans to retire, effective Nov. 17. I admire her dedication to Spencerport and the education of our students for the past 20 years, and wish her well in retirement. More on Mrs. Robinson's announcement may be found on page 4.

This November Cornerstone includes a variety of updates from around our district, including the new Latin honors system, 2020 pre-K pilot and digital report cards. I hope you take time to review these updates, and as always, enjoy the news, photos, and highlights from our schools. Have a very Happy Thanksgiving.

Dan



Dan Milgate
Superintendent of Schools



Apply by Nov. 26 for DEC Camp Scholarship!

The Spencerport Nature Center Committee is offering a full one-week summer camp scholarship opportunity for a student aged 11 (as of Dec. 1) through 17. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) runs the camps, which includes environmental and sportsman education along with outdoor fun. DEC camps also include hands-on methods to learn outdoor skills such as backpacking, camping and canoeing. Campers will explore diverse habitats, study stream life, solve challenges, and learn environmental concepts. Participants come away with an awareness of the importance of nature and of stewardship of our natural resources.

Who is eligible to apply?

- Students currently enrolled in the Spencerport Central School District. Students ages 11 through 17 are eligible.
- Meets age requirement guidelines as established by the DEC Environmental Camp Program.
- Applicants should have an interest in the outdoors and in learning more about our environment.

How do interested students apply?

- Application packets can be found at your child's school counselor's office, on the Nature Center website at http://www.spencerportschools.org/parents___community/nature_center or contacting Tracey D'Alonzo at 349-5321.
- Applications are accepted starting Mon., Nov. 4 and must be submitted to school counselors' office no later than 4 p.m., Tue., Nov. 26.

For more information regarding the DEC Camps, camper requirements, camp dates/locations and their programs, please visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/29.html> or contact Tracey D'Alonzo at 349-5321 or by email at tdalonzo@spencerportschools.org

continued from cover

Calling all of our alumni!

Called "Soup with the Superintendent" we invite our former graduates to attend "by their decade" on the following Wednesdays at 12 p.m. in the District Office building. Space is limited so please RSVP to Marcy Clapper at mclapper@spencerportschools.org.

Date	Year of Graduation
Dec. 11	70's and earlier
Jan. 15	1980-1989
Feb. 12	1990-1999
Mar. 11	2000-2009
Apr. 15	2010-2019

In addition, please visit our website and fill out our brief alumni survey.

Digital Report Cards are coming

As we look forward to the end of the first marking period, Spencerport Central School District continues to work toward the implementation of digital report cards. This change offers an opportunity for parents/guardians to receive their students' report cards quickly, in a more cost-effective and eco-friendly way. The easy-to-use system, known as Campus Backpack, will provide 24-hour access to report cards through the existing Infinite Campus Portal.

All families will receive a paper copy of the report card for the first marking period, along with the digital copy available through Campus Backpack. Please be mindful that, after the first marking period, all report cards will ONLY be available through Campus Backpack and will not be mailed or sent home with students. The instructions on how to access Campus Backpack will be included with the first report card and published on the district's website. In addition, please watch for a video tutorial on how to access the system.

For your convenience, please find the dates of the first and second marking periods according to our primary and secondary grades:

Cosgrove/HS:

- 1st marking period Fri., Nov. 15;
- 2nd marking period Fri., Jan. 31

Elementary Schools:

- 1st marking period: Fri., Dec. 6
- 2nd marking period: Fri., March 27



Munn to pilot pre-kindergarten program

The Spencerport Central School District will pilot a pre-Kindergarten program at Munn Elementary School next fall.

The pilot, recommended by the district's instructional team last spring, will focus on teaching the academic and social/emotional readiness skills that are most helpful to young learners entering kindergarten.

"We continue to look for opportunities to build upon our instructional programs to benefit students," Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Ty Zinkiewich said. "Our team spent a great deal of time looking at whether we had a need for a pre-K program, visiting area districts with UPK programs, identifying our potential outcomes, and designing an introductory pilot."

Zinkiewich explained that a pilot affords us the ability to help school readiness and transition to kindergarten; evaluate our progress; and then make a determination on the future of this program districtwide.

In the coming months, the district will be working with Munn Elementary School to develop curriculum and refine protocols and contact families of eligible pre-K students.

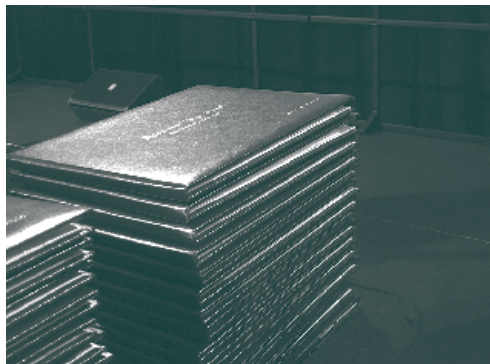
District switches to Latin honors system for Class of 2022

Schools across the country are moving from traditional ranking systems to more universal honors systems. Many districts in Monroe County have already made the switch. After three years of research and community input, the Spencerport Class of 2022 will be the first graduating class to receive honors based on the Latin system.

Latin honors will be awarded by each individual student's grade point average (GPA), regardless of the GPAs of their peers. The three-tiered system provides a set goal for all students to work to achieve. The honors will be structured as follows:

- Summa cum laude (with highest honor): 4.7+ GPA
- Magna cum laude (with great honor): 4.5 – 4.699 GPA
- Cum laude (with honor): 4.2 – 4.499 GPA

Because each tier has a qualifying range, students have the flexibility to take classes they are interested in or which will help them work toward future goals. Up to this point, each student in a graduating class was assigned a "rank" based on a



weighted numerical GPA. The Latin honor system should alleviate that pressure and encourage students to take academic risks or follow their interests.

When asked how this change would affect college admissions or scholarship opportunities, Assistant Director of Scholarship and Honors for Undergraduate Admissions at the University of Rochester Michelle Vogl stated, "At the University of Rochester we give no formal scholarships for a student's rank. We look for students who are maximizing the opportunities afforded them, based on their environment. For merit scholarships, we look at the rigor of

a student's profile more than the scores."

Likewise, representatives from the SUNY Geneseo, Rochester Institute of Technology, and the University at Buffalo agreed that there is no disadvantage to the Latin system.

Megan Sarkis is a Spencerport parent and Assistant Director of Admissions for SUNY Brockport. She supported this change. "At a high-achieving school district like Spencerport, class rank is often not an accurate representation of student accomplishment. A student who, according to class rank, may seem 'middle of the pack' might actually graduate Cum laude. Colleges unfamiliar with Spencerport Schools' high standards might overlook that applicant based on their rank."

The Spencerport Board of Education adopted the new policy in June of 2019. As the official implementation will not affect a graduation ceremony for two more academic years, a committee will work to develop new practices for choosing speakers and enhancing the student-centered ceremony.

Canal View Principal announces plans to retire

Canal View Elementary Principal Carol Robinson has announced her plans to retire, effective November 17, 2019. Robinson's retirement will cap a 41-year career in education, with 20 years in Spencerport.

On her decision to retire, Robinson reflected that she is looking forward to this "new path and will treasure the memories that she has created here in Spencerport".



Robinson began her career as a teacher and principal for the Diocese of Rochester, then went on to serve as an assistant principal in Webster. She has been with the Spencerport School District since 2000, serving for four years as director of English Language Arts (ELA) and Academic Intervention Services (AIS), in 2004, as the director of elementary education for six years, and in 2010 became the principal at Canal View Elementary.

Superintendent Dan Milgate said, "I admire Mrs. Robinson's commitment to the education of our students and appreciate her dedication for 20 years in our district. On behalf of our Spencerport and Canal View community, I want to extend our congratulations to Mrs. Robinson and wish her all the best in her retirement."

Milgate indicated that he and his leadership team are committed to ensuring a smooth transition. During the interim, Lisa McCarthy, director of professional learning and acting Canal View assistant principal will serve as the principal. We will be inviting input from key stakeholders on the ideal characteristics sought in the next principal at Canal View Elementary School.

2018-19 Spencerport calendar wins statewide honor

The New York School Public Relations Association (NYSPRA) announced on Sept. 20, that Spencerport was among the award winners in its 40th annual NYSPRA Communications Awards.

Lanette Cypher, Spencerport communication specialist, won an Award of Excellence for the 2018-19 district calendar with its social media and hashtag theme. Of the 513 entries judged by communications professionals around the country, slightly over one-third received awards.

Board President Kevin Hutton, Superintendent Dan Milgate, and Cypher attended a special NYSPRA awards luncheon on Oct. 25, during the New York State School Boards Association convention in Rochester.



Office professional of the year honors for Lisa McLaen

Congratulations to Lisa McLaen, who was named the 2019 New York State Association of Educational Office Professional (NYSAEOP) of the Year.

McLaen has worked at Munn Elementary School as an administrative assistant for the last five years and was recommended by Principal Mike Canny.

"Lisa is extremely efficient, productive, well organized and possesses superior technical abilities and skills," Canny wrote. "Her strongest attribute is her kindness and compassion. She brings a passion to serving

and supporting the students, parents, staff and community (at Munn)."

The award annually recognizes office professionals for their professional development trainings, nomination letters and recommendations, and community/extra-curricular involvement. Among her many achievements, McLaen was solely responsible for creating the new look and functionality of the NYSAEOP website, and was later awarded first place for websites by the national association.



2 SCSD educators selected as **NYS Master Teachers**

Two Spencerport educators, Christina Buckner and Steven Schultz, have been honored among the 2019 New York State Master Teachers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Governor Andrew Cuomo announced the selection of 228 teachers to the prestigious program on Sept. 27.

NYS Master Teachers are recognized for their excellence and commitment to growth in three areas:

- the depth of their **content knowledge**,
- the effectiveness of their **teaching practices**, and
- the efforts and value they place on connecting with their **students' families and communities**.

Being selected and named as a New York State Master Teacher is among the highest professional honors awarded to

our state's Science, Technology, Computer Science, Engineering, and Mathematics educators.

Christina Buckner

Christina Buckner is currently in her 16th year at Spencerport High School, where she has taught Living Environment, Chemistry, Food Science, and Forensic Science. Last year, she received training from Syracuse University and is currently teaching Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA) Forensics (Chem 113). She is also considered an adjunct professor in the Department of Forensic Science.

In addition to classroom instruction, Buckner also serves as the Class of 2021 student council advisor and participates in a STEM outreach program with her SUPA Forensics classrooms, taking them to elementary schools to provide STEM lessons to students in grades K – 5.

Steve Schultz

Steve Schultz began teaching more than 20 years ago at the primary grades. Schultz is currently an enrichment specialist and technology teacher at Munn Elementary School. Throughout his career he has served on many committees such as professional development, schoolwide enrichment, building planning team, and has been a mentor to new teachers.

Outside of school he has volunteered his technology skills to help youth organizations maintain and run their websites. As a NYS Master Teacher, Schultz is looking forward to working with colleagues on improving his teaching of STEM and inspiring children to follow their passions.



SHS teachers bring awareness to **human trafficking**

Spencerport High School teachers Kelly Daly and Julie Brennan invited representatives from the Angels of Mercy to speak to their Eastern Studies and English classes about human trafficking. The presentation concluded a curriculum unit where the students read a novel about a 13-year-old girl from Nepal who was sold into sex slavery in India.

Brennan said of the Angels of Mercy, "We have had this organization come in in the past, and it has been a great awareness piece for our kids."

The students also made small pillows for the agency, who gives them to the community they serve.



HOMECOMING



2019



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Superintendent of Schools

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November

25	HS Parent/Teacher Confs.	3-6 p.m.
25	1st day Mod A/B winter sports practices	
26	Board of Education	7 p.m.
27-29	Thanksgiving Recess: no school	

December

2	HS Business Honor Society Induction	6:30 p.m.
2	SSBC, D.O.	6:30 p.m.
3-5	Munn & Canal View Holiday Shoppes	
3	HS Scheduling Information Night	6:30 p.m.
3	MSPA	7 p.m.
4	Taylor PTO	6:30 p.m.
4	HS Holiday Choral Concert, PAC	7 p.m.
5	Munn Winter Concert	7 p.m.
6	BPA Pizza with Santa	6 p.m.
6	Munn SnowMunn	6:30 p.m.
6	MTAG BBB tourney, E. Gym	7:15 p.m.
7	Taylor Concert, Greece Ridge Mall	
7	MTAG BBB tourney, E. Gym	3/5 p.m.
9	HS National Honor Society Induction	7 p.m.
10	2nd Emergency Bus drills, Grs K-5 & 9-12	
10	Winter sports Mod A/B parent, S-A meeting	5:30 p.m.
10	Board of Education, D.O.	7 p.m.
11	2nd Emergency Bus Drills, Grs. 6-8	
11	Taylor Holiday Concert	7 p.m.
11	Bernabi Winter Concert	7 p.m.
12	Cosgrove Choral Concert	7 p.m.
17	BPA	6 p.m.
17	CVA	6:30 p.m.
17	HS Instrumental Concert, PAC	7 p.m.
18	Cosgrove Winter Band Concert	7 p.m.
19	Boys Swim Relays	5 p.m.
20	HS/CMS 15-week progress reports via parent portal	
20	Munn STAR assembly	2:45 p.m.
23-3	Holiday Recess: no school	

Students participate in WHAM collection for Hurricane Relief

Spencerport High School students in Mrs. Sandy McGreevy's math classes collected toiletry items to donate to those impacted last month by Hurricane Dorian. McGreevy's classes collected a total of 1,400 items, and one of the top students overall was junior Faith Allen, who donated \$100 of her own money, collected a total of \$580, and shopped for items herself.



Faith said, "this contribution makes me feel whole. Knowing about the horrible conditions and still living my day normally made me feel guilty because I knew there were people in the Bahamas struggling day to day. It felt like I was missing a puzzle piece in my heart. After donating, I felt complete and content that I was able to help."

"I think what Mrs. McGreevy did by organizing donations in her math classes was such a good idea. I remember her telling us that people's family members were missing, and that's what really moved me to do something."

With the monies she collected, Faith donated more than 900 items to relief efforts. Junior Ella Genovese also donated more than 150 items.

The Spencerport School District theme this year is around gratitude in all aspects, and we certainly thank Faith and Ella for their compassion and generosity. Great job, Rangers!