



The Blue D Quarterly

DOLGEVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

JUNE 2021



Thank you Class of 2021



"In the past year, we have missed out on many opportunities, but the ones that stand (out) are the little ones that mean the most to me. The simple conversations with all of your friends at lunch or getting together for team dinners. For me, what I will miss the most at DCS is the relationships that I built with different individuals such as teachers, coaches, and friends."

Those are the words of senior Kyle Paracka who recently reflected on his senior year at DCS. Despite the uncertainty around the COVID-19 pandemic, many seniors embraced interactions with other students and teammates.

Senior Charlie Benoit said even though it wasn't the senior year students expected, they still cultivated good memories.

"Many of us still do have times, memories, or other activities that we will always appreciate. Personally, most of my best memories are with teams. Whether it was a volleyball team, a softball team, or even a battle of the books team, these were always my happiest moments in school," Benoit said.

High School principal Ruth Leavitt said she's incredibly proud of the seniors for their perseverance and as a hard-working and generous group of students. She said in spite of the pandemic, they continued to work to serve the community.

"For example, in August, a group of seniors made masks for our entire school to help students feel comfortable returning to school," she said. "Several of the seniors also balanced school and work with after-school jobs. These are characteristics that colleges and employers look for, and that makes me proud to work with them."

Inside this issue

JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH NEWS

2



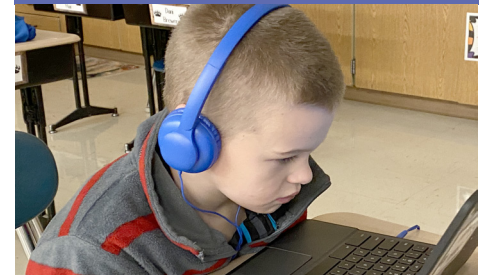
SPORTS NEWS

4



ELEMENTARY NEWS

6



Valedictorian and salutatorian

page 2

Meet the new superintendent

page 3

Athletes honored

page 4

Senior banners

page 5

Spirit Week pictures

page 7



Meet the Valedictorian and Salutatorian of the Dolgeville High School Class of 2021

AUDREY WILLIAMS - VALEDICTORIAN

Audrey Williams has been named the valedictorian of the Class of 2021.

In addition to many extracurricular activities, Audrey is completing a rigorous high school academic program that includes numerous college-level courses.

During her time at DCS, she was a class officer and held membership on the soccer, cross country, basketball, and softball teams. Additionally, she was a member of the National Honor Society and participated in clubs such as Battle of the Books, Student Council, Odyssey of the Mind, and the Spanish, science and outdoor clubs. She was also involved in Youth Summit, Girl Scouts, and various community service projects.

Audrey credits her success to hard work and the caring, close-knit learning community at DCS.

"I feel really lucky to have been raised in our community," she said. "I'm grateful for all the ways that DCS challenged me and helped me grow up."

She said being named valedictorian was important to her because of all the hard work she put in at school.

I have always worked hard because it was important to me to improve. Some children have a natural talent or gift to easily understand. I just was not one of them. So, I worked harder, studied longer and got extra help," she said. "Work ethic and effort is more important than natural talent every time."

After graduation, Audrey plans to attend college with a major in history and a minor in pre-law.

BRIANNA BRUCE – SALUTATORIAN

Brianna Bruce has been named the salutatorian of the Class of 2021.

She is completing a rigorous high school academic program with college-level courses in addition to numerous extracurricular activities. When she graduates, she will have earned 32 college credits.

During her time at DCS, she played volleyball and participated in the Battle of the Books, band, and Odyssey of the Mind.

Brianna credits the dedication of her teachers – especially during the COVID-19 pandemic – for helping her achieve success.

"All of my teachers have cared for my well-being and wanted me to succeed. They pushed me to do my best," she said.

"Being named salutatorian means that my hard work paid off."

Her advice to other students: make sure you are always caught up on your work.

"Students should also ask for help whenever they need it," she added.

After graduation, she plans to attend college to and pursue a career in a science field.

Three students inducted into National Vocational Technical Honor Society

Three students were inducted into the National Vocational Technical Honor Society (NTHS) at Herkimer BOCES this spring. They include Andrew Doolittle (advanced manufacturing), Natasha Keyser (child and family services), and Ashton Young (automotive technology).

NTHS is an honor society recognizing excellence in career and technical education. To join the honor society, students are nominated by their teachers. They must carry a minimum grade point average of 3.0, demonstrate excellence in their CTE program, and participate in extracurricular activities at BOCES and/or their home school.

Meet the incoming DCS superintendent, Joseph Gilfus

On July 1, Joseph Gilfus will take over as the new DCS superintendent. He comes to the district after working as interim director at the Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego (DCMO) BOCES. Prior to his work there, he served as high school principal at Thousand Islands from 2004-2020. He has also served as the assistant principal/athletic administrator at the Camden Central School District.

A native of Auburn, N.Y., he graduated from Weedsport Jr.-Sr. High School and received his bachelor's degree in English (superintendent development program) from SUNY Albany, and a Certificate of Advanced Study in educational leadership and master's degree in physical education & athletic administration from SUNY Brockport. He is currently working toward a doctorate in educational leadership from Syracuse University.

We caught up with him to ask about his educational goals at DCS.

Q. Why did you want to come to DCS?

A. When reflecting on my next chapter as an educator, I was in a position to be very selective, both with what I wanted to do and where. As an aspiring superintendent, I knew I wanted to continue my work in a smaller, rural school community, much like my entire professional career. After reading the Dolgeville superintendent search brochure I said to myself, "this school district is a perfect match for me, and I



think I'm a strong match for Dolgeville." After submitting my application and throughout the recruitment process, I made several trips to the school community to confirm my feeling that we were a strong match for each other. As the interview process continued, my desire to become the superintendent at Dolgeville continued to grow and grow, and today I am very grateful to have been selected to lead the district beginning July 1, 2021.

Q. What are a few of your goals/visions for the district?

A. As superintendent, my vision includes:
A. To achieve excellence by providing DCS students and staff a rewarding and challenging environment supported by strategic planning, fiscal transparency, and utilization of available resources.

B. To raise the tolerance levels on the part of all DCS students and staff in a way that will result in a safe, non-

threatening, healthy environment where everyone feels comfortable and motivated to contribute.

C. To promote positive relationships between and within the DCS school community by engaging in and practicing clear communications and informed transparency.

Q. What do you think are your best qualities?

A. As I reflect, objectively, I would say that my better qualities include being approachable. I'm an active listener, highly motivated, dedicated, and goal driven, very composed, accountable, and an everyday learner. My best qualities are that I see the best in everyone, and that I am student centered in all that I do.

Q. What do you want the community to know about you?

A. I want the Dolgeville School Community to know that I will always give my best in everything I do, will never claim to be perfect, and I am committed to learning every single day. Always know that what is best for students will always come first, and that I am also committed to supporting all students and families regardless of who they are and what they aspire to achieve. I'm going to do everything I can to support them. I want our students to have every opportunity to pursue their interests, regardless of what that might be, and feel proud of themselves.

Voters approve 2021-22 DCS school budget

On May 18, voters approved the district's \$18,967,328 budget for 2021-22 with 183 yes votes to 82 no votes. Voters also approved a proposition to allow the district to expend funds from the 2020 Transportation Vehicle Reserve Fund for the purchase of one 64-passenger bus.

Two Board of Education members were also elected to five-year terms. Scott Hongo received 220 votes and Carolyn Williams received 213 votes.

Residents also voted to allow the district to appoint a student to serve on the Board of Education as an ex officio non-voting member.

Two seniors selected as Section III scholar-athletes

Congratulations to seniors Brady Wilcox and Audrey Williams, who were selected as Section III scholar-athletes. To be eligible for selection, student-athletes must have maintained a cumulative grade point average of 90% or better, and have participated in varsity competition in a Section III sponsored sport.



Senior volleyball/track athletes honored

Dolgeville honored its six senior volleyball players this year. They include: Laikyn Cramer-Snowman, Annaliese Davies, Maighen Ehrle, Ashlynn Seeley, Brianna Bruce, and Charlie Benoit.

The volleyball team finished its season with a perfect 9-0 record.

They were one of the only two teams to finish the season undefeated in the Herkimer County POD.

In May, multiple varsity track seniors were honored. They are, from left: Andrew Risley, Jonathan Wright Jr., Annaliese Davies, Ashlynn Seeley, and Kyla Jaquay.



Senior cheerleaders and football players honored

Senior football players and cheerleaders were honored at a ceremony at Bill Bynon Field in June.

Senior football players include: Josh Hart, Brady Wilcox, Ashton Kluge, Philip Keeler, Kyle Paracka, and Austin Guile

Senior cheerleaders are: Hailey Smith, Amie Polczynski, Kayleigh Mowers, Shi-Anne Morgan, Haylie Lyon, Brooke Kessler, Alesandria Jodway, Skylar Harper, and Sasha Brown.



Varsity softball team honors seniors; plays first game on new field

The varsity softball team held its senior day in mid-May. They also played a game on their home field with new dugouts built with grant funds provided by the Edwin J. Wadas Foundation.

Seniors honored in the team picture included: Charlie Benoit, Brianna Bruce, Maighen Ehrle, Nadia Lyon, Isabella Nichols, Kayleigh Mowers, and Audrey Williams.



Banners honoring seniors line Main Street

If you're driving through the village of Dolgeville, you're bound to see the banners honoring all of our seniors on Main Street. The DCS Student Teacher Parent Association (STPA) purchased the banners to show their pride and support for the members of the Class of 2021.

"These young adults have had to deal with a lot during their senior year and we are proud of their perseverance and accomplishments. We wish them all the best in their future endeavors," the STPA treasurer said

DCS students participate in piano recital



In early June, about 15 DCS students participated in a piano recital featuring the works of Tchaikovsky, Cornelius Gurlitt, Harold Arlen, and more. The audience also heard contemporary tunes such as the theme to "Star Wars," "Edge of Glory," and "Penny Lane."

The students who performed include: Frank Guenther, Gregory Gonyea Jr., Kamryn Comstock, Andrew Risley, Ethan Scheurman, Harleigh Hall, Emily Brewer, Kadience Thomas, Phoenix Longway, Elijah Morse, Tia Ruggiero, Will Rauch, and Jamie Pierce.

Classrooms hatch chicks; process streamed on Youtube

The Dolgeville community had a chance to watch the entire chick hatching process unfold this year as two teachers documented the process on Youtube.

Special education teacher Trista Simpson and her 13 students witnessed the entire process in her classroom while engaging in multiple lessons.

Students learned new vocabulary and the parts of an egg, while also reading fiction and non-fiction books about eggs, chicks, and chickens. They also produced egg-to-chick journals, engaged in a virtual chicken farm field trip, and created a collaborative informational egg-to-chick presentation in Google Slides.

"Some skills students reinforced included observation, reading comprehension, writing, animal husbandry, collaboration,

communication, and technology," Simpson said.

"The students absolutely loved the experience. All the students were excited to come to school each day to learn more. They enjoyed watching the hatchcam from home and in other rooms. They especially loved watching the chicks hatch. Several students said this was the best experience of their life."

Simpson - who raises chickens at home - said after dealing with the pandemic all year, students were uplifted by the project.

"This year, the most important benefit of the project was that it gave the students in my class, as well as the students throughout the school, something positive and new to think about," she said.

Meanwhile, Maria Lybolt, who



teaches living environment has been hatching chicks in her classroom for five years.

She said after Simpson's successful hatch, she decided to hatch a second set of eggs in her living environment class.

"It's the perfect project for our genetics unit and spring," she said.



Third grade students at DCS hone literacy skills during mask breaks

Jody Lamphere's third grade class has taken advantage of the warm weather in two ways: to take a mask break outside and hone their reading skills. The class recently read "Stone Fox" by John Reynolds Gardiner.

Lamphere said literacy is one of the most important educational tools that can be instilled in every student. She noted that at the third grade level, students are beyond learning to read and are now reading to learn.

"Reading is part of every academic area as students further their education. Having a strong literacy background is of the utmost importance. Making reading engaging and fun is critical for many students," she said.

"Simply getting outside in a new atmosphere, allowing them to be comfortable, and enjoying reading a book that they are interested in can make a world of difference."



Dolgeville Elementary students experience remote puppet show

In March, students at the elementary school experienced virtual puppet presentations performed by Puppets In Education.

Students saw live, remote performances focusing on building kindness.

Based out of Vermont, Puppets in Education teaches children how to keep themselves safe and healthy and to appreciate each other's differences.

Special thanks to Fuccillo Chevrolet for their generous donation to our students at DES.

Scenes of Spirit Week at DCS

► The hallways were alive with enthusiasm as students and staff dressed up during Spirit Week in May.



Dolgeville juniors receive college awards



DCS juniors were presented with various college awards on June 10. The recipients included:

- **Jacob Grossman.** George Eastman Young Leaders Award - University of Rochester
- **Jayda Estey.** LeMoyne College Heights Award
- **Philip Nash and Patrick Murphy.** RIT Computing Medal - Rochester Institute of Technology

- **Kent Palbon and Jacob Grossman.** RIT Innovation and Creativity Award - Rochester Institute of Technology
- **Mackenzie Farquhar.** Frederick Douglas and Susan B. Anthony Award in Humanities and Social Sciences - University of Rochester
- **Gabriel Siver.** Xerox Award for Innovation and Information Technology - University of Rochester

- **Philip Nash.** Clarkson Leadership Award.
- **Philip Nash.** Rensselaer Medal Award. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.
- **Jacob Grossman.** Clarkson Achievement Award.
- **Gregory Gonyea.** St. Lawrence University Book Award
- **Jayda Estey.** Wells College 21st Century Leadership Award
- **William Rauch and Mackenzie Farquhar.** Student Sage Award - Russell Sage College
- **Tia Ruggiero and Jayda Estey.** Elmira College Key Award
- **Jayda Estey.** Bausch and Lomb Honorary Science Award - University of Rochester.
- **Tia Ruggiero.** George H. Ball Community Achievement Award. Keuka College
- **Kaitlyn Panella.** Colonel Emerging Leaders Award - Wilkes University



DOLGEVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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8 | DOLGEVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



DCS High School yearbook dedicated to science educator

The 2021 Dolgeville High School yearbook was dedicated to living environment teacher Curt Bray.

Bray has taught in the district for 24 years.

“It was very special. It’s always nice to get recognized,” Bray said.

“I was completely shocked, so they kept a good secret. My friends and family knew for a couple of months, so that made it even more special.”

