

# eNEWS

Allegheny Valley School District

## Second Quarter 2023

*Photo: Ms. Emerick, grade 6, leads a student discussion for the House Program. The program provides students with opportunities to build community, character, and academic development.*



## Acmetonia Elementary Begins House Program

Acmetonia Elementary initiated a new program in the building this fall. The School House System, a cross-grade approach to building community, character, and academic development, was added to the school structure as a way to build a positive community environment at Acme. "By creating

smaller, more connected communities within the broader school community," School Counselor Rebecca Garbisch explained, "students have a built-in place where they belong." That feeling of belonging fosters learning by creating an environment where students feel safe and therefore learn best. In addition, within the House System older students become role models for younger students and develop leadership skills.



Earlier in the year, students and staff were divided among five houses. Each month, a designated time is set for houses to meet together for various community-building activities. Embedded into the House system is a reward system and each house earns points through things like athletic contests, academic success, artistic endeavors, team spirit, and attendance.

So far, students are enjoying being a part of a house and especially being able to earn house points. Any teacher can award a student a point for their house for displaying positive behavior, and students have been very excited to be able to contribute points to their house. "I believe the House System is a fun way for us to promote positive behavior in our building," commented Garbisch. "Also earning house points can be a huge confidence booster for students—particularly those who don't feel like they stand out in any one area."

The program will continue throughout the school year and into the future. The plan is to hold monthly house meetings and reward houses for house points earned. Each year students in grade 3-6 will remain in their assigned houses, while students entering 2nd grade will be sorted into their permanent house.

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## Holiday Giving

Each year around the holidays, students and staff celebrate the spirit of the season and take the initiative to spread goodwill. Participating in a number of service projects, student activity groups, classrooms, and staff members find new and traditional ways to give back to the community. Projects ranged from collecting and distributing items to entertaining throughout the local area.



Last year, grade 6 students collected pairs of pajamas to distribute to local community members through the food bank. "The patrons at the food bank were appreciative," commented organizer Kelly Slomka, "and suggested that the project [be to] deliver blankets this year, as this is a greater need and easier for us to purchase." Sixth grade collected the blankets, using the project for academic purposes as well as part of their community service project through the Classroom Champion curriculum. Ms. Rudolf's third grade class got involved by making four tie blankets. The class was responsible for measuring, cutting, and tying the blankets. The blankets were then given to the 6th grade as part of the overall project.

Another sixth grade class - Megan Lowry's - teamed up with Kelly DiPalma's Kindergarten class to create cards for the local nursing home. In addition, the class received a \$100 amazon gift card from Classroom Champions to hold a service project, and the group decided to create dental kit bags for the local food bank. The kits included a toothbrush, toothpaste, mouth wash, and a flosser.

The High School continued the giving spirit with the Grade 9-10 Activities Committee organizing a Holiday Food Drive for the Lower Valley Food Bank. Boxes were distributed to all the school's homerooms, and the homeroom with the most donations won a prize. One hundred and eighteen items were donated to the Food Bank.

In addition, Allegheny Valley staff purchased "Secret Santa" gifts for students in the elementary and secondary buildings. Presents included clothing, toys, beauty and hygiene products, and gift cards. The staff looks forward to these drives each year as a way to give back to the community.

Student vocal and instrumental music performances were also held throughout the season. The High School Choir and Band provided a joint holiday concert in December, filling the auditorium with wonderful sounds of the season. The choir also performed at the Springdale Veterans Association for a luncheon. Students from the elementary building traveled throughout the area, performing at senior care facilities and the Pittsburgh Mills Mall local malls. The groups not only put audience members in the holiday spirit, but the concerts help students gain confidence and learn performance skills.

Through all of these activities and the many more that occurred throughout the past months, students have given of themselves. They've learned the importance of community, lessons not only for the holiday season. Over the course of the school year, staff and students put in time and effort to show appreciation to their community for all that they have been given. For community members, it becomes an additional reason to be proud of Allegheny Valley.

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## WTAE Teacher of the Month

At the beginning of the 23-24 school year, WTAE television invited the public to nominate worthy teachers for a chance to be awarded \$1,000 toward new classroom supplies, courtesy of Closets by Design. Each month during the school year, the station will select one deserving educator. For December, that teacher was Springdale Jr-Sr High School's Mr. Connor Green. A social studies teacher, Mr. Green teaches US History II and political science at the building. He was selected from more than 1900 nominations for the award.



Ms. Janelle Hall, a representative from Closets by Design, and members of the WTAE team visited Springdale High on Monday, December 18. The entire student body was called to the McGhee Fieldhouse to surprise Mr. Green with the honor. When he walked in, the applause could be heard all the way up to the main office. "Connor is just an unbelievably deserving young man," said

Principal Andy Leviski. "To have this recognition for our school and for Mr. Green, it's just awesome."

Junior Brianna Ross nominated Mr. Green for the award. "...ever since I was in seventh grade, [Mr. Green] has always strived to help me academically," she said. "I struggled a lot when I was younger with academics and stuff. It wasn't really my thing and he really helped me to enjoy learning."

Mr. Green was surprised by the award, not to mention appreciative. He humbly accepted the oversized check and stood for photos and interviews. More than 1900 submissions were received for the award. "None of this would be possible without the countless educators and mentors that had a major impact in molding me into the Teacher I am today," stated Mr. Green. "I am extremely proud to represent Springdale and grateful to be a Dynamo."

Link to WTAE Broadcast: <https://www.wtae.com/article/teacher-of-the-month-mr-green-springdale/46202417>

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## Fall Sports Honors

### Football

Valley News Dispatch First Team - Chase Weihrauch

Valley News Dispatch Second Team - Colton Gent

### Boys' Soccer

**All-Section** - Billy Lawrence, Mason Gent, and Jackson Pribanic; *Player of the Year*: Billy Lawrence; *Coach of the Year*: Paul Palo

**All WPIAL Class A All-Stars** - *Player of the Year*: Billy Lawrence

**All State Team** - Billy Lawrence

**Valley News Dispatch First Team All-Stars** - *Player of the Year*: Billy Lawrence

### Girls' Soccer

**All-Section** - Briana Ross, Molly Hurley, Ashley Ross, Brooke Taliani

**All WPIAL Class A All-Stars** - Molly Hurley, Ashley Ross, and Briana Ross

**Valley News Dispatch First Team All-Stars** - Molly Hurley, Briana Ross

**Valley News Dispatch Second Team All-Stars** - Ashley Ross

### Girls' Volleyball

**We Serve First Tournament** - Isabella Savko, Ava Biagi

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## Note Worthy...



### Going the Extra Mile

Allegheny Valley's Extra Mile Award acknowledges staff members, students, and community members for their achievements. The program is designed to show all members of the District community that they are appreciated and respected. Individuals recognized through this program are honored at school board meetings.

Any staff member, student, parent, or community member is eligible for the awards.

In November, nine Allegheny Valley students who achieved perfect scores on their PSSA Text Dependent Analysis



### Congratulations Staff Grant Winners

Staff members work long hours in classrooms and throughout the buildings to support learning. Some staff members go above and beyond to apply for grants to help fund programs. An even fewer number are actually awarded grants. Congratulations are given to the following staff members on grants they have received:

- Grade 3 teacher Angie Rudolf was awarded a grant from the Spectroscopy Society of Pittsburgh. With that grant, she was able to get an owl pellet kit and enough owl pellets for the whole third grade to



### Students Honor Our Veterans

The annual Veterans' Day Celebration was held on November 10. As in past years, local veterans were invited to the high school for breakfast and a program held to recognize their service to the community and our country. Students from both Acmetonia Elementary School and Springdale Jr-Sr High School participated in the program, serving as the Masters of Ceremony, playing instruments, and singing patriotic songs.

Allegheny Valley continues to sponsor the event to express its thanks and to help students

essays were recognized. These students are to be admired for their academic achievement. Students were given certificates, pins, and a gift card for their accomplishments.

participate in dissecting. The program tied in perfectly with their animal classification unit - In addition, grade 6 teacher McCall Emerick was presented with a Kids of Steel Site Grant that includes 15 pairs of Brooks running shoes for participating students and \$500 to spend on the Kids of Steel program. Kids of Steel is the Acmetonia Elementary School after school running program. As their final activity, the participating students run in the children's marathon, which will be held this year on May 4, 2024.

understand the importance of veterans to the community. Students and staff spent many hours developing the program to make the veterans feel welcome and know how much they are appreciated. The event serves as a time for students to gain a greater respect for those who have given so much.



### Red Ribbon Week

According to the DEA website, "Red Ribbon Week highlights the importance of living a drug-free life. It presents an opportunity for parents, educators, and communities to reinforce the drug-free messages they share with their children throughout the year. During Red Ribbon Week, youth and adults around the nation pledge to increase their knowledge by learning more about the destructive effects of drug abuse, including prescription drug misuse, and renew their commitment to live a healthy, drug-free lifestyle."



### Technology Sale

Allegheny Valley recently held a Surplus Technology Sale for the public. Included items were used laptops, tablets, printers, and other miscellaneous technology items. These devices are no longer in use for the District, but still have value. All items were in working condition or otherwise marked and prices depended on exact model and condition. The District sends its thanks to the community for their support of the sale. Any proceeds will go back into the Technology Department for future purchases.

"I am absolutely thrilled by the results of our tech sale and



### Kilowatt Klosets Open

District Kilowatt Klosets officially opened to all students on November 20th. Allegheny Valley held a sneak preview of the rooms prior to their opening, however, students in many of the District clubs have already experienced the spaces. They have been helping to set up the rooms - building racks, sorting items, and folding clothing. Students can now make an appointment to "shop" in the Kloset if they are in need of any clothing, hygiene products, or other miscellaneous items.

The community has backed this initiative whole-heartedly,

Each year, counselors develop activities for students to celebrate Red Ribbon Week. The events help to explain the importance of the week to students and give them an understanding of why they should remain "drug free." One of this year's events welcomed Reddy Kilowatt to Acmetonia Elementary School to help reinforce that students are "ready" to stay drug free.

these items back to our community," commented Matt Maine, Supervisor of Technology. "Our District is committed to providing a great education and that requires modern technology, so, understandably, some things fall below our modern standards yet are still valuable to others. Selling these items to the community and getting some value back is a no-brainer. I thank everyone involved with the sale and thank the community for their continued support of our schools."

and the District is truly thankful for all of the donations given. A special thank you is sent to Mikayla Haus (12th grader) for her donation of winter coats! Mikayla held a coat drive at two local churches and was able to collect over 170 coats for the Kilowatt Klosets at both Acmetonia and Springdale High School. Thank you for all your help Mikayla!

Families and residents are still welcome to help with this effort by going online to established Wish Lists on [Walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com), [Target.com](https://www.target.com), and [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). (Look under Allegheny Valley School District Kilowatt Kloset.) Any additional questions can be sent to Ms. Danielle Britton, District Social Worker, at [dbritton@avsd.school](mailto:dbritton@avsd.school).

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## Alumni Hall of Fame Accepting Nominations

Members of the community and all alumni are asked to consider nominating a deserving alumnus for the Allegheny Valley School District's Alumni Hall of fame program. [Information and the nomination form](#) can be found on the District's website. Nomination forms are also available in the school offices.

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## Use of Student Photos or Interviews

Individual and/or group photographs, interviews, and/or videos of Allegheny Valley students may be taken for use by the District in publications, on its web site, or in local newspapers. Allegheny Valley provides opportunities for positive media publicity; a staff member is always present at these times. If a parent/guardian would prefer that his/her child not be photographed/interviewed for publicity purposes, he/she should send written notification to: Allegheny Valley School District, Public Relations Department, 300 Pearl Avenue, Cheswick, PA 15024.

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## Gold Cards

Senior residents are reminded that passes to enter District events are available. Residents can register for a Gold Card at Springdale Jr-Sr High School's main office. Seniors will need to complete an application and present proof of age, 62 or older, to receive their card. The cards do not have to be renewed.

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## A Message From The Superintendent

Message from the Superintendent - December 2023



**J** Allegheny Valley School District

