

# Southern Dutchess News

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September 7-13, 2022

## Superintendents look forward to new school year with excitement



The Wappingers Central School District 2022-23 school year began for students on September 7. Wappingers Central School District Superintendent Dr. Dwight Bonk (inset) remarked on the new school year.

-Courtesy photos

**By Kristine Coulter**

Local school superintendents Dr. Dwight Bonk and Dr. Matthew Landahl answered questions about the upcoming 2022-23 school year in the Wappingers Central School District (WCSD) and Beacon City School District (BCSD) respectively. Both districts welcome back students this week.

**WCSD welcome 10,500 students back**

“The District has been working dili-

gently during the summer months in preparation for the start of the 2022-23 school year, which begins on Wednesday, September 7th. We remain very thankful to our community for the support of our 2022-2023 Budget, which enabled the District to add staff and services in the area of student mental health and wellness. The District is also grateful for the voter-approved Capital Improvement proposition, which allowed for significant

improvements to the infrastructure of our 15 buildings,” said Bonk.

He noted, “The District continues to make the necessary systemic changes that provide for the most effective and efficient District Operations. The District welcomes Dr. Kathy Affigne as the Interim Principal of Brinckerhoff Elementary School. The District will

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## Friends, food and fun at annual Oktoberfest in Poughkeepsie



Evelyn Wuytack and Mike Reichert of Germania's Almrausch Schuhplattler Verein dance.

-Courtesy photo by Karen Rose

**By Kristine Coulter**

Oktoberfest is coming to Germania of Poughkeepsie. The annual event will be held September 9 – 11 at the Germania Fairgrounds, 51 Old DeGarmo Road in Poughkeepsie. The schedule is Friday from 5 – 10 p.m.; Saturday from 1 – 10 p.m. and Sunday from noon – 5 p.m. Daily admission is \$5 (16 and under are free). There is \$1 discount for veterans and military with ID. Parking is free. The event is held rain or shine.

Sylvia Reuter and Georgia Herring are the co-chairs for Oktoberfest this year.

“Oktoberfest is a festival...it's a celebration of Bavarian History and German culture, food and (of course) beer!,” said Reuter.

“My family joined the club back in 2009, and we have helped out every year at the festival. The club is run 100% by our member volunteers. The festival is a great time for families - in fact, my granddaughters (5 and 3) are going to be dancing in the traditional German Dance group called the Almrausch,” stated Herring.

The annual festivity will have dancing and music. Music will be provided by the Bratwurst Boys, The Joe Unger Band and The Adlers Band. Traditional dancing will be performed by Germania Almrausch Schuplattler Verein.

The event is about “getting together and having a good time with each other. It's that feeling of Gemütlichkeit (German for the feeling of warmth and coziness),” remarked Reuter.

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## Stanford Fire Dept. delivers on promise to help Ukraine with fire, medical supplies

**By Rich Thomaselli**

As the Town of Stanford Fire Department is set to again honor the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks, and makes preparations for its upcoming Community Day – including a fundraising dinner for the people of Ukraine – Ed Zick can finally breathe a sigh of relief.

The head of the Stanford Fire Department's 9-11 Committee and his colleagues were emotional after months of hard, and a times frustrating, work to collect much-needed fire equipment and supplies for a village in war-torn Ukraine. When the group traveled from the small Dutchess County

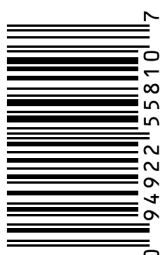


Members of a Ukrainian Church in Syracuse meet with members of the Town of Stanford Fire Department. The Stanford Fire Department is fulfilling its effort to ship over 3,000 pounds of firefighting and medical equipment to a village in war-torn Ukraine. Fire departments from all across Dutchess County assisted with donations of equipment.

Courtesy photo

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Your News



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# Superintendents look forward to new school year

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begin the search for a principal in the early fall.”

Regarding school safety, Dr. Bonk said, “In the area of school safety, which remains our top priority, the regular practice of collaboration with Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro, Dutchess County Acting Sheriff Kirk Imperati, the New York State Police, local municipal officials, and law enforcement partners that serve our District from the Town of East Fishkill, Town of Fishkill, Village of Fishkill, Town of Poughkeepsie, Town of Wappinger, and the Village of Wappingers Falls as well as our security vendors continues to promote a safe school environment.” He continued, “We are very grateful for their continued support and are pleased to report that our ten elementary schools will have an increased police presence throughout each school day. Their detailed schedules will not be disclosed for security reasons, but we believe their presence will become noticeable immediately.” School Resource Officers have been added this year at both Van Wyck Junior High School and Wappingers Junior High School, said the superintendent, in addition to those previously assigned to both John Jay High School and Roy C. Ketcham High School.

The District, said Bonk, has also secured the following services:

- Engaged the services of the Putnam-Northern Westchester (PNW) BOCES Regional Safety Services program to conduct building safety audits of all of our schools. This work will be carried out throughout the fall with recommendations for improvements being made along the way.
- Ordered technology enhancements that will improve the current emergency proce-



The Beacon City School District 2022-23 school year began for students on September 6.

-Courtesy photo

dures and communication systems, and looking forward to the implementation of these solutions.

- Established a goal of focusing on Threat Assessment Training based upon the University of Virginia Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG). This work will be ongoing throughout the school year and beyond.
- Training for staff will remain an integral part of the District and building safety plans, and new system enhancements and training opportunities with PNW BOCES will be utilized regularly.

“We continue to offer our regular curricular programs as well as our extra-curricular programs and continue to expand our Career and Technical opportunities through our Career, Vocational, and Technical Education

Initiative, adopted two years ago, which expands opportunities for career awareness opportunities and experiences at the K-8 level. We are grateful for the support that we have received from our business community in establishing School-Business Partnerships to make this a reality,” said Bonk.

“We are looking forward to returning to the business of education as we move forward this school year. Masks are not required for individuals during school hours, or at school extra-curricular activities or events in our school buildings or on District property,” remarked Bonk. “The remaining COVID protocols which remain, per the New York State Education Department, require those individuals who test positive for COVID-19 to isolate for five calendar

days, with Day Zero beginning with the date the sample was provided for testing or the date first signs and symptoms appeared. The individual may return to school after Day Five as long as they demonstrate symptom resolution and are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.”

Bonk stated, “In closing, we look forward to the return of our 10,500 students, and a most productive and rewarding school year for all! Our staff will be ready, willing, and able to assist our students by providing a safe school environment that fosters the highest degree of academic, social, and emotional success for our students”

### Excited for the new year in the BCSD

“My message to students is to relax, do your best, ask for help from any school staff when you think you need it, all questions are good, and make new friends,” said Landahl when asked what he would tell students welcoming them back to the BCSD for the upcoming school year.

Landahl noted, “We have one new principal this year, Cathryn (Catie) Biordi who is the new principal at Sargent Elementary. She was one of the assistant principals at Rombout Middle School for the past four years.”

Regarding COVID-19, Landahl said he does not have any new updates at this time. He noted, “We urge families to keep students with symptoms home from school but masks and quarantining from exposures are not required this year. We will still have the occasional vaccine clinic to help people stay updated with that if they choose.”

Regarding what he would like students in the BCSD to know, Landahl stated, “We are looking forward to a year of exciting learning experiences, field trips, and improved communication this year, and even more in-person events to build our community further.”

Landahl said, “We are incredibly excited to get this year started! We can’t wait to see everyone!”

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