There was a time, not so long ago, when summer meant “play,” and fall signaled “study” – and if there had been emojis to illustrate the mood associated with each, the first would have been met with a smiley face, the latter with a sad or, at least, a ‘meh’ countenance. Today, the lines have blurred.

Educators at all levels recognize that play and study can, and should, yield a common end: learning. Innovative summer programs and inventive school-year classes and special programs aim to engage students fully, to encourage them to explore and discover. The goal is reached through many avenues and those who follow ‘roads less travelled’ will find awe and wonder waiting. Our local schools are taking the next generation on journeys through new and exciting pathways, with committed guides to lead them along the way.

Sleepy Hollow

Challenge Summer Institute Grows in Tarrytown

Photo: Abigail Bartolacci enjoyed the hands-on combo of games and learning at Tarrytown’s Challenge Summer Institute.

Launching rockets into the sky, building a robot or surviving a zombie apocalypse: that’s just a taste of what children experienced at the Challenge Summer Institute this summer, now in its eighth year in Tarrytown. The two-week program, run out of the Washington Irving School, engaged students entering third through ninth grade in hands-on experiences, setting goals and achieving them. Challenge Enrichment teacher and founder, Maureen Massaro, said, “Students enjoy things when they get to choose.”
To immerse students in Native American culture, high school students, who volunteer as counselors, constructed a wigwam from pipes and canvas. The children made rain sticks, dream catchers, miniature teepees and more. Instructor Rachel Gonzalez, a former principal at WI, returned to the school to share her passion.

The Zombie Outbreak Class, with the help of instructor Sheree Spagnoli, led sixth through eighth graders into real life emergency training to teach their team how to survive a worldwide epidemic.

Sleepy Hollow Middle School Welcomes New Principal

Joshua Whitham, the new Sleepy Hollow Middle School principal, knows that he is in the right place. “It definitely is a place that’s open and inviting,” he said. “I am eager to enhance experiences for our students. They are the priority.”

The veteran educator has 17 years of experience, as principal of the A.B. Davis Middle School in Mount Vernon; as assistant principal at Middle School 203 in the Bronx, where he initially worked as a math coach and data specialist; and as a math teacher at Raphael Cordero Bilingual Academy at JHS 45 in Manhattan. Whitham, who started his career as a 6th grade elementary school teacher for gifted and talented students, is currently a doctoral student at Fordham University, studying K-12 Administration.

He says of the middle school environment, “The students are at an age when they are still innocent and have joy. They are taking their first steps again” into a world of more demanding work and complex schedules. He wants Sleepy Hollow Middle School to be a “true bridge” for students as they enter from Washington Irving Intermediate School and exit to Sleepy Hollow High School.
Whitham credited Superintendent of Schools Chris Borsari with beginning a new partnership with the Yale Center for Emotional Learning, which is helping Tarrytown introduce a program that emphasizes emotional growth in students during the critical pre-teen and teen years.

**Sleepy Hollow Middle School Students Invited to New Bridge Opening Ceremony**

Thirty Sleepy Hollow Middle School students had the chance on Aug. 24 to attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony that opened the new Tappan Zee Bridge, renamed the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge. The students, accompanied by Superintendent of Schools Christopher Borsari and Principal Joshua Whitham, were the guests of Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Governor Cuomo drove on the new bridge span in a 1955 Corvette with Armando “Chick” Galella of Sleepy Hollow, a Bronze Star recipient and Pearl Harbor survivor who drove the same model year Corvette as part of the inaugural procession that crossed the Tappan Zee Bridge on December 15, 1955. The old bridge will serve southbound/eastbound drivers until the new bridge completely replaces the 62-year-old Tappan Zee Bridge later this year.

Students from Tarrytown, who have been heavily involved in educational programs involving the new NY Bridge, won a contest last year to name the baby falcon that was born in a nest on the bridge.

**Briarcliff Manor**

**Library Media Specialist McCabe to Serve on Printz Award Committee**
experience in the district and can assist the newcomers. The next step in the Family to Family program is to match up new families with those that have
and other organizations, and signed up for library cards at the Ossining Public Library table. The They spoke with representatives of Open Door Family Medical Centers, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts
Dozens of families recently attended a Family to Family welcome party for newcomers at Park
Family to Family event of the project. The AMD PTA supported this part center, surrounded by blue tiles - stands as a beacon in the lobby of the Anne M. Dorner Middle
understanding are expected and practiced in the building. A shiny green, blue and black mosaic mural - a green flower with the words "be kind" in the
Ossining's Anne M. Dorner Middle School unveils Kindness Mural and Giving Tree
School (Open Door Family Medical Centers completed renovations to its space at AMD); installing a new floor in the gymnasium and expanding the nurse's office at Roosevelt School; Park School later this year.
Ossining construction projects prep district for the fall
improvements before welcoming students for the fall.
Run/2 Mile Walk September 9. The nonprofit, created in 2003, strives to enrich education by
Ossining MATTERS Education Foundation's 15th Annual Run/Walk a success
Forty families also spent Aug. 21 to 23 at Park School in a program called "Countdown to
Pre-K," which helped them get acclimated to the new environment.
Dozens of soon-to-be pre-kindergarteners took part in a scavenger hunt at Park School the
morning of Aug. 24, learning where the cafeteria, gym and library are located, and easing any
anxiety about starting their Ossining education.
the whimsical – a pool for dogs. Other students suggested a rope course, a soccer field, a water
Ossining Girl Scouts and other community organizations. Ossining Superintendent of Schools
With the help of United Way of Westchester and Putnam, the Ossining School District converted
United Way of Westchester, Putnam and Ossining Schools
Ossining “John is a warm and dedicated educator who will greatly support the learning of our early
elementary students,” said Principal Deborah Mariniello.
Harrison.
A 32-year veteran of education, Wells has experience in an elementary setting and over 20
Harrison have announced the appointment of John Wells as the interim assistant principal at
Irvington UFSD appoints interim Dows Lane Elementary School assistant principal
Storytelling with Folk (& Fairy) Tales with
Lane Elementary School; and Hands-on Science challenges; Mad Month of Science with a New York Hall of Science representative at Dows
Other programs include the Be A Friend Project, which brings peer support to young victims of
destiny Imagination to encourage teams to have fun, take risks, focus and frame challenges
Flexible Seating and Student-Centered Classroom Redesign that gives students the power of
fifth-graders to enhance the study of ancient civilizations in Mexico, Central and South America;
on-your-feet exploration of Shakespeare's languages and themes that encourage students to be
excited, not intimidated, by Shakespeare's language in an 8th Grade Shakespeare Residency.
The 21 grant awards include: A visit by author Jeff Anderson (Zack Delacruz: Me and My Big
Mouth) to Irvington Middle School sixth-grade English Language Arts classes for A Day of
basics of scale and proportion to build a 3-D model from a 2-D picture of Washington, D.C.;
learning exciting and engaging.”
"We are so proud of our partnership with the IEF," Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kristopher
Apple program allows skilled students to serve district-wide needs
Techies rule!
James Kaishian who spoke of the opportunity to start over every September in a school
community and the challenge of transitioning from summer vacation to back-to-school (as
school year from Superintendent of Schools Dr.
Briarcliff's staff enjoyed a welcome-back breakfast and inspirational words about the coming
Teka McCabe, Briarcliff Manor's Library Media Specialist for the middle and high school, was
Award each year, the nation's most prestigious award for young adult literature, equivalent to
Libba Bray's
Written by Evelyn Mertens
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