



Tiger TRADITIONS

Inspiring Excellence and Leadership in All!

January/February 2018 - Volume 22 • Issue 7

Operation Reindeer Brings Holiday Spirit

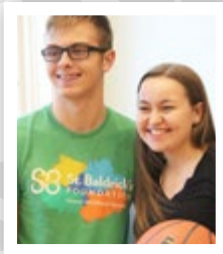
Hundreds of local children will have a very Merry Christmas, thanks, in part, to dozens of Mexico High School volunteers who helped pack donation bags for dozens of families.

Members of various student groups, such as the Friends of Rachel Club, French Club, French Honor Society, Spanish Club and Spanish Honor Society among others, spent nearly an entire day filling bags with brand new toys, dolls, basketballs, mittens, hats, blankets and other items as part of the annual Operation Reindeer event held at the Mexico Presbyterian Church. Similar efforts of MACS students has occurred throughout the past few decades.

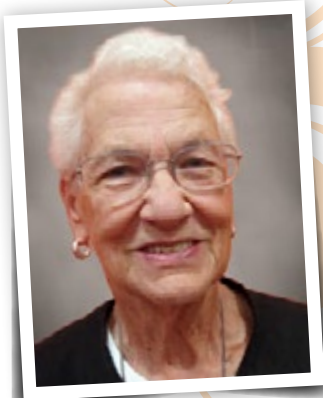
FOR Club members also presented the group with a \$390 check to help fund a portion of the undertaking. Those funds were raised by making and selling holiday ornaments.



Mexico High School seniors Brandi Maynes and Allyson Ruby, both members of the Spanish Honor Society, select gifts to pack for local children, as part of the community's annual Operation Reindeer event.



In Memorium



With deepest sympathy, we remember Janice Clark for her dedicated 31 years of service to the MACS Board of Education. It is because of her commitment to education that thousands of children will benefit greatly from the quality instruction, athletic offerings and community outreach opportunities offered within the Mexico Academy & Central School District. ***Her love for students will carry on through our remembrances.***

400 Middle School Students Perform Holiday Concert

Mexico Middle School chorus members brought the sounds of the season to a packed auditorium during their winter concert.

It was standing-room only when the fifth-grade and sixth-grade opened the night with "Oye La Musica," which had components in both English and Spanish. They also sang holiday classics, which were met with thunderous applause from the audience.

Music Teacher Gina Giufre, who directed the students, as well as the seventh-grade and eighth-grade chorus, commended each participant for learning the music and working together. The concert continued with Morgan Eastman and Edward Sanderson as percussionists and Alana Rice as the soloist for the seventh-grade and eighth-grade chorus' opening number "Like the Beat of a Drum," and additional holiday tunes. The select chorus also performed "Happy Holiday/White Christmas" and "Jingle Bells (Sort Of)" before the seventh-grade and eighth-grade chorus ended the night with "Hanukkah Nagliah," which prompted the group to sing in Hebrew.

About 400 out of the middle school's 600 students participate in chorus and/or band.



Mexico Middle School 7th & 8th grade chorus members



Mexico Middle School 5th & 6th grade chorus members



A Message From the Superintendent



Happy New Year!

I hope you and your family had a wonderful holiday season filled with joy, peace, love and happiness. May 2018 bring you and your family nothing but the best.

As your school district, we stand at the forefront of a world of possibilities leading to a dynamic transformation of education on behalf of our children, families, and our community. While it is customary to set New Year's resolutions at the

beginning of a new calendar year, our staff commits to our District's resolutions at the beginning of each school year. As we enter 2018, we are reminded of our commitment to our resolutions, which are designated as goals set through our strategic planning process. Not only do our annual and long-term goals align with our Vision, Mission, and Core Beliefs, they also commit to dynamic transformation so that all of our students may reach their fullest potentials and be prepared for their choice of lifelong pursuits beyond our doors.

This new year brings us standing at the cusp of completing our capital project, which has transformed those areas of our District that were targeted, to unprecedented levels of professionalism and 21st century learning conditions.

We also continue to focus on all areas of our District so that our students reach their fullest potentials. We have continually set and met or exceeded our goals in every department and school. Some examples of our focus and progress is exemplified in the next paragraphs.

At Mexico High School, we have created innovative partnerships that offer our students the opportunity to earn college credits (up to an associate's degree) while simultaneously earning high school graduation credits through the programs listed below:

1. New Visions (CiTi)
2. CiTi CTE
3. Project Lead the way
4. College Board AP
5. SUNY Oswego
6. P-Tech
7. OCC & CCC in MACS classrooms (Concurrently Enrolled)
8. OCC & CCC Distance Learning & On-Line @ MACS
9. OCC at OCC (Dual Enrollment)

Our students' success in these programs further confirms their college and career readiness beyond their high school degree. These opportunities also prepare our students for not only successful completion of college course work but helps them understand the commitment to degree completion. Furthermore, these opportunities assist our students in overcoming the financial burden that can prohibit entrance to college or hinder degree completion.

Last year, we updated our Math instruction in Grades Pre-K-4, which has resulted in 10% growth in student achievement results. This year, we are continuing our progress and success by expanding the improvements at our Middle School.

This year, we are also focused on duplicating our Pre-K-4 math success in reading. Our Pre-K-4 teachers have committed to increased professional development to learn the cutting-edge research based instructional techniques and strategies.

Furthermore, our wonderful teachers are piloting new and improved instructional reading resources so that the most recent and highest interest instructional resources support our students' learning. We look forward to all of our work in this area significantly increasing student-reading achievement. While this seems to be a comprehensive approach to increasing student learning in reading, we are not stopping there! Furthermore, we ask for your involvement.

As stated in my most recent Tiger Traditions article, our data generally shows that our students who do not participate in Pre-Kindergarten typically under-perform students who attend Pre-Kindergarten. As we enter 2018, we are focused on how to successfully intervene so that all of our students reach their highest potentials and close any achievement gaps as soon as our children enter our schools. We are forming a task force to utilize data to drive instructional decision-making. The committee would be tasked with creating a plan for our District to better support students who enter Kindergarten, but may not be Kindergarten ready. We are confident that such a committee would be able to create a plan that could be implemented for September 2018. If you would like to participate, please contact Assistant Superintendent, Mary Beth Horn at MHorn@mexicocsd.org or (315) 963-8400 extension 5406.

Sincerely,

Sean C. Bruno

Mexico Middle School a Buzz With Spelling Bee Contestants

T-r-u-c-u-l-e-n-t-l-y.

That was the word student Autumn Warring spelled correctly to win the Mexico Middle School spelling bee after she edged out 14 competitors in the final rounds.

Additional participating students included: Kayla Reed, Jacob Poissant, Kieran Henderson, Cosette Laffan, Maria Vazquez, Jacob Gates, Liam Killian, Avery Mack, Journey Girard, Ethan Rhoads, Bill Mills, Logan Haynes, Tyler Samson and Devon Walker.

The level of difficulty increased with each round. Ultimately, Warring was named the school champion while Laffan, Samson and Mack were named finalists. Those four students have advanced to The Post Standard/WCNY 2017 Spelling Bee written test on Saturday, Jan. 13 at Onondaga Community College.



Mexico Middle School student Autumn Warring smiles after correctly spelling the word "truculently" during the final round of the school spelling bee.

Proud to be MACS



November Proud to be MACS Honoree

Denise Bauer

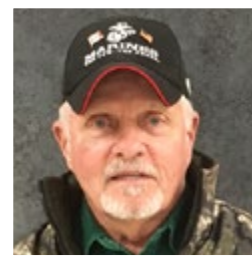
Denise Bauer, special education teacher, has been selected as the November Proud to be MACS recipient. She is a graduate of Sandy Creek Central School and has earned a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from SUNY Plattsburgh before she obtained her master's degree in special

education from SUNY Oswego.

Her perseverance and drive brought her from substitute teaching at area school districts in the special education setting before she joined the Mexico district in 2001. Her ability to put students first, believing in them and helping them achieve academic and personal goals is like no other. She has worked in a 12:1:1 classroom before joining the Make Sense Shop in 2007. Opportunities students received in the community inspired Bauer to duplicate the program on the Mexico campus to help provide needed and/or required academic assistance without the expense and lost time of traveling to Pulaski. That is how the Tiger Terrace came to be at the Mexico High School where students now learn the skills of baking, cooking, serving, and cleaning.

She is a driving force full of vision and passion for her students. She said the favorite part of her job is making students realize their potential. PTBM nominator Carolyn Maloney said that Denise goes above and beyond for all of her students' needs. "Her creativity and imagination allows her students to express school and life in such a positive way. All you have to do is go into her classroom and watch what she does daily to know that she meets the district vision and mission statements with endless effort." That coincides with her favorite memory of seeing the growth achieved by one of her students where the student went from starting as a dishwasher to finding a career in the food industry.

While dedicated to her MACS family, the Sandy Creek resident and husband, Russell, have also raised their own family-- daughters Olivia and Adaiah and son Everett.



December Proud to be MACS Honoree

Phil Laux

Phil Laux, MACS bus driver, has been recognized as the December 2017 Proud to be MACS recipient.

A graduate of West Seneca Central School District in Erie County, he entered the U.S. Navy in 1964, serving on the aircraft carrier the USS Wasp as a flight deck electrician. His commitment to his country continued when he later joined the Army Reserve and the Air National Guard.

It is his commitment to the Mexico Academy & Central School District that also makes us proud. He joined the district as a cleaner in 2011, and now he has a more direct connection with our students. Laux has maintained a mission of transporting MACS students with special needs to and from school, and he always goes above and beyond required duties to ensure those students receive the best experience possible. He won't take all of the credit for his bus run's success. Laux said it has been the camaraderie at work, especially with bus monitor Jody Lehtonen and Transportation Director Julie Bradish, which makes his daily bus runs thrive.

His dedication to those MACS students is nearly immeasurable, as he has interacted with them, listened to both their celebrations and struggles, volunteered to personally transport a student to his graduation ceremony and kept his bus clean to support a student's severe allergic condition, among several other qualities.

When not at work, Laux and his wife, Theresa, have raised eight children.

"Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself."

~John Dewey

Palermo Elementary Families Enjoy Holiday Fun Night

Palermo Elementary School students and their families enjoyed the recent Parent Teacher Club-sponsored Holiday Fun Night filled with activities, laughs and holiday cheer.

Students received a snack, craft bag, Santa letter template and special time with Santa to tell him what they would like to open up Christmas morning. Plenty of photographs were taken and the 85 students, siblings and parents all brought non-perishable food donations for the school's annual holiday food drive.

The event is an annual tradition, which serves as an opportunity to promote family, friendship and the spirit of giving to the community.



Santa visits with Palermo Elementary School students during the annual PTC Holiday Fun Night.

Macs Middle, High School Avid Students Raise Over \$500 for Hurricane Harvey Victims



Mexico High School AVID students

Four months after Hurricane Harvey made landfall in Texas, people are still struggling to rebuild their lives. That is where Mexico middle and high school AVID students came together to spread holiday cheer, hope and stability to the Youngblood Intermediate School in Houston, Texas. The MACS students hosted both fun pasta and bake sales to collect monetary donations for three struggling Youngblood families who lost everything in the storm. Over \$500 was raised!

An AVID representative from that school contacted MACS AVID coordinators Kim Julian and Jeanne Baldwin for help so families affected by the flooding could purchase Walmart gift cards to purchase necessities for their children and spouses. Each family received a \$167 gift card.

Baldwin said she hopes the effort will inspire others to make a difference in someone else's life.

AVID has been a successful program in the Mexico Academy & Central School District which has taught skills and behaviors for academic success, provided support for strong student/teacher relationships, created positive peer groups and enabled several MACS students to succeed, persevere and obtain necessary life skills.



Mexico Middle School AVID students



From left, Mexico Elementary School students Kadence Hogle (third-grade), Lindsey McCann (kindergarten) and Doshon Green (first-grade) join a musical performance by "Didgeridoo Down Under" guest Rob Thomas, as he plays a traditional Australian instrument.

Mexico Elementary Offers Diversity Through Music

While they learned about Australian culture and music, Mexico Elementary students also received character trait education during the recent "Didgeridoo Down Under" performance.

Students were guided to a better understanding of kindness, tolerance and respect for other people, cultures and the planet. Combined with musical lessons with sticks, a drum and didgeridoos (traditional Australian instruments made from termite-hollowed eucalyptus tree trunks), students learned that music can be as diverse as the instruments played or people playing them. Several classmates were invited to perform with various instruments alongside Thomas.

Board of Education Recognition

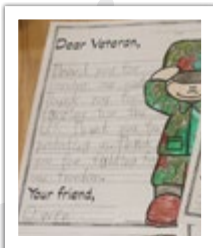


Pictured with the Board are Shannon Main, Kristine Gagnon and Lori Searor who received recognition for their exemplary response to a student issue.



Art students Alexis Cleveland, Alyssa Dann, Kimberly Heagerty and Megan Shaw pose with the board after receiving their recognition.

New Haven Elementary School Salutes Local Veterans



New Haven Elementary students thanked local veterans with praise, song and handcrafted gifts during a recent Veterans Day celebration.

While students learned the importance of thanking a veteran for their service to their country, it was the veterans themselves who expressed gratitude to students and staff members for making them feel welcomed, appreciated and loved. A few veterans even wiped tears from their eyes.

Several students presented the veterans with thank you letters and cards, pictures and handmade poppies. Principal Jennifer Granholm also sent each of the 30 veterans home with a certificate of appreciation.



New Haven Elementary students recite the Pledge of Allegiance adjacent to veterans who attended the school's recent Veterans Day assembly.

Palermo Elementary Students Begin Kindness Project

Students at Palermo Elementary have begun to understand just how important their uniqueness is in establishing a sense of community in their school.

Thanks to the efforts of school counselor Dian Roberts, students have taken off with the "Palermo Puzzle" project in which people write positive, inspiring messages on a paper puzzle piece and then hiding it somewhere in the school in hopes of brightening a classmate's or teacher's day. Roberts said students have begun to realize that everyone at Palermo Elementary fits together just like a puzzle.

Some of the messages have included: "Be nice," "Be kind," "Think positive thoughts" and "Have a good day." The concept, Roberts said, perfectly aligns with the Leader in Me initiative the school follows, including the "7 Habits of Highly Effective Kids."



Palermo Elementary students show off puzzle pieces they created to be distributed in places throughout the school in an effort to promote kindness.

New Haven 1st Graders Blast Off Into Space During Videoconference

New Haven Elementary School first-grade students love school to the moon and back.

During a portion of their recent virtual field trip to outer space, the children saw a sunrise from outer space, learned all about life of astronauts and toured the earth as a shuttle went past the horn of Africa and Lake Ontario.

"That is super amazing!" one student shouted.

Peter Robson of the Challenger Learning Center in Rochester, told the students that their generation could be the first to step on Mars.

First-grade teacher Alexandra Scorzelli said the videoconference paired perfectly with an upcoming first-grade academic unit on astronomy.

The experience was made possible by CiTi's Distance Learning program.



New Haven 1st graders watch a space shuttle take off during a virtual field trip.



MACS Girls' Swim Team members Reatha von Holtz, Jesse Faulkner, Carolyn Zedack and Alexa von Holtz receive recognition for their accomplishments.



Pictured with the board is Denise Bauer the MACS November Proud to be MACS honoree.



Students Morgan Rhoads, Joshua Washer, play director Cassie Story received recognition for all their hard work on the fall play.

Holiday Happenings



MMS Students, Staff Trot to Physical Education Fun

Mexico Middle School staff members and students gobbled up a good time during the 3rd annual Turkey Trot race.

All 225 participants took off for the 1.5-mile course as several classmates and teachers whistled and cheered their efforts. Health teacher Richard "Rick" Lenahan coordinated the event to promote physical fitness fun. In a record nine minutes and 57 seconds, eighth-grader Kian Long earned a first-place finish. He is pictured, at left, with seventh-grader Adria Ariola who was the first female student to cross the finish line.

The top two runners from each grade level received a T-shirt. Each racer also snacked on apples and cider, donated by Behling Orchards.



Google Expeditions Transports Mexico Elementary Students Around the World

Mexico Elementary third-graders walked the Great Wall of China, ventured around the Democratic Republic of Congo, witnessed the beauty of the Great Barrier Reef and explored Santa's workshop all from their library media center.

The virtual field trips were made possible with Google Expeditions kits, on loan from the CiTi A foam viewer placed up to their eyes allowed students to travel the world with 360 degree views by visiting multiple locations via an iPhone screen.

Librarian Dianne Barnes controlled the experience by directing locations from the Google Expeditions app. She acclimated all Mexico Elementary students with the new technology and in the spring she aims to request the kits to correlate the virtual trips with lesson plans.

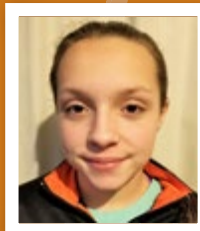


Ella Hardy, Mexico Elementary third-grader, uses a Google Expeditions viewer to explore Santa's workshop during a recent virtual field trip experience in the school library.

MACS Elementary Students Donate Over 1,000 Items to Local Food Pantries, Animal Shelters

The greater Mexico community had a happy holiday season and full bellies thanks to the generosity of all MACS elementary students and staff members.

Mexico Elementary's annual holiday food drive, run by the fourth-grade class but open to the entire building, collected over 500 food and personal hygiene items alone for the Mexico Food Pantry, while Palermo Elementary's "Project Share" garnered over 400 non-perishable items for the Palermo United Methodist Church's food pantry. Several hundred non-perishable items were also collected at New Haven Elementary.



Congratulations to MMS student Alexa Von Holtz for being named to the 2017 All-CNY girls swim & diving team!

NHS Chapter Welcomes 20 New Members

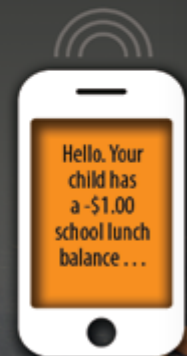


The MACS "Los Inteligentes" chapter of National Honor Society welcomed 20 new members to its ranks during its 62nd Annual Rite of Induction. Pictured are current members, front and robed, and new inductees, standing behind.

Negative Lunch Balance Accounts System

New to you: beginning soon, the Mexico Academy & Central School District will send automatic calls to all parents and/or guardians when their child's meal account reaches a negative balance of \$1 or more. Our fantastic staff members within the MACS Food Service Department would be happy to answer any questions about this system, or provide additional information. They may be reached at (315) 963-8400, ext. 5025.

-\$1.00 =



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan. 22-25 Regents exams

Jan. 25 20-week marking period ends

Jan. 25 Early dismissal: MS: 10:45 a.m., Elem: 11:45 a.m.

Jan. 25 BOE workshop, 6 p.m.

Feb. 1 HS True Beauty Day

Feb. 1-3 MS musical auditions

Feb. 2 Report cards mailed

Feb. 5 PAL band educational concert, 6 p.m.

Feb. 7 MS band educational concert, 6 p.m.

Feb. 8 BOE mtg, 6 p.m.

Feb. 9 NH movie night, 6 p.m.

Feb. 12 NH band educational concert, 6 p.m.

Feb. 14 MS early dismissal: 1:55 p.m.

Feb. 19-23 NO SCHOOL mid-winter recess

Feb. 22 BOE workshop, 6 p.m.

Hour of Code Excites, Engages Palermo Elementary Students

Palermo Elementary students transformed into game programmers during the annual Hour of Code celebration.

They were joined by millions of other students from around the world who were introduced to computer science and programming, as part of a global movement.

Students followed tutorials that gave directions on how to program a game or activity, such as "Minecraft," and utilized coding language while they persevered and problem-solved to make everything correctly function.

Librarian Tiffany Carpenter said basic coding skills are taught at Palermo Elementary during library time in kindergarten and the level of both difficulty and interest increases at each grade level.



Palermo Elementary fourth-grader Makena Jewell shows Librarian Tiffany Carpenter how the Codesters "Cheer Routine" works after she completed a tutorial on how to code the game to make the cheerleader do a routine during a recent "Hour of Code" event

Congratulations



Congratulations to Mexico High School science teacher Christina Scales who was recently named a Master Teacher for the fall 2017 season! Thank you for continuing to inspire our students to achieve academic success.