



Amagansett School News



A Message From the Superintendent

SETH M. TURNER, SPRING 2023

Dear Amagansett School Community,

The spring season is upon us and exciting things are happening within our school community. Our buildings and grounds department has embarked on an improvement project to beautify the exterior of our building, including updates to our athletic fields, and the work has been much appreciated.

Our student actors and musicians are preparing for several upcoming events that are sure to amaze audiences. First, our instrumental and chorus groups are putting the finishing touches on the songs for this year's spring concert, which is scheduled for May 11. They have been rehearsing for weeks to make the performances pitch-perfect. In addition, our thespians will be staging a performance of the beloved

musical "Annie" this spring. The familiar tunes and touching story line are sure to leave audience members impressed.

We have also enjoyed several fun events and activities so far this year. Earlier this year, our school welcomed members of the Quogue Wildlife organization for a special presentation to students. The students enjoyed getting to meet several animals that the organization helps to protect, as well as learn more about this valuable resource in our local community. Special thanks to the presenters for an enlightening program. We hope to host them again in the future. Additionally, our fifth and sixth graders had fun during their glow party, amazing science projects were on display during our school science and research fair, and many enjoyed the Hugh King guided history tours of Amagansett. Special thanks to our school's

PTA for helping to fund these events.

As safety and security remain a top priority in our district, please know that we continue to review and revise our emergency plan to embrace important practices. Throughout the winter, we completed several review drills with our students and staff to help them remember the actions to take should a school lockdown become necessary. I'm very proud of how successful these ran and the quick actions of those participating.

As a special reminder for all registered voters, this year's budget vote and trustee election will be held on May 16 from 2-8 p.m. We thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,
Seth Turner
Superintendent of Schools

A Musical Review

By Leo Nadel, fifth grader

“Macbeth” was one of the best productions Amagansett School ever had, in my opinion. The sixth grade started out the production doing Act 1! What happened was that they were showing what types of plays William Shakespeare made – either comedy, history or tragedy – and what type of play “Macbeth” is. Then the sixth graders said Dr. Seuss wrote his books the same way William Shakespeare made his plays (iambic pentameter). So, to demonstrate that, the Pre-K students went around saying, “I don’t like green eggs and ham.” Then the kindergartners sang a song about “Macbeth” to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.” After that, the first graders said quotes from “Macbeth.”

Then the real show began and the fourth graders were up. They were responsible for Act I, which is when Macbeth meets the three witches and they tell him that he is going to be king. Next, the fifth graders

showcased Act II, which is when Macbeth kills the king because Lady Macbeth forced him to, and then he regrets what he has done. As soon as the fifth graders were done, the second graders performed Act III. In Act III, Macbeth’s friends get suspicious that Macbeth killed the king. Finally, to finish the show, the sixth graders came. They had the final act, Act IV. In Act IV, Lady Macbeth sees blood on her hands, and she can’t get the blood off because she imagines it. She expires, and after that, Macbeth gets into a fight and he, too, is gone, and then Malcolm becomes the king. And that is the end of the show.

We couldn’t have done this performance without Ms. Rosalie Luber, our resident Shakespeare teacher, nor without our stars. The show was so awesome and the props, the background and the lights wouldn’t have been possible without Mr. Fargione. The music was by Ms. Kamp. A special thanks to the whole school, who made this possible.



Taking to the Airwaves

As an extension of their classroom studies, Amagansett sixth graders participated in a unique social studies project that fused ancient history with today’s technology – an “Ancient Rome” podcast!

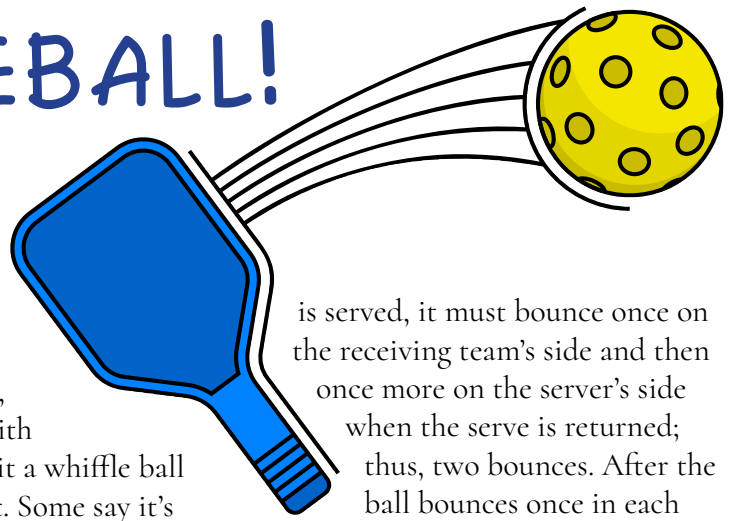
This project developed out of a class discussion on how people receive news today. Teacher Jason

Hancock and teaching assistant Matt Heffernan created model podcasts for the students. Then, in small groups, the sixth graders created their own podcasts from specific topics, including the origins of Rome, Rome’s government, an expanding Rome and the Punic War, the fall of the Roman Empire, debate over whether Caesar

was a reformer or a dictator, Rome becoming an empire and the early days of the Empire.

Students were provided with a checklist and suggested textbook pages. The five-minute podcasts were shared with classmates at the culmination of this creative, hands-on and real-life application of history.

POPULAR PICKLEBALL!



One of the enrichment offerings that seems to always have a full roster is Amagansett's Pickleball Club. There is no denying the popularity of this uniquely named game, but students and staff can attest that it is popular for good reason! Mrs. McGovern and Mrs. Mitchell share their love of the game while teaching eager players about this fast-growing activity that is a fun workout for all ages.

So what is pickleball, you ask? The name "pickleball" was inspired by one of the inventors of the game, Joel Pritchard. His dog, a cocker spaniel named Pickles, chased after the ball and kept running off with it. Pickleball was invented in 1965 by Pritchard, Bill Bell and Barney McCallum in Bainbridge Island, Washington. They were looking for

something fun for their families to do together and didn't have enough equipment to play a game of badminton, so they improvised with table tennis bats to hit a whiffle ball over a badminton net. Some say it's a combination of ping pong, tennis and badminton. To participate, you need a paddle, net and ball, but this equipment is different from the three traditional sports that pickleball is compared with.

Over time, the inventors improvised, and now the game uses a hard plastic ball with holes in it. The net in pickleball is lower than the net in tennis, and players must observe the two-bounce rule. When the ball

is served, it must bounce once on the receiving team's side and then once more on the server's side when the serve is returned; thus, two bounces. After the ball bounces once in each team's court, both teams can choose to volley or play the ball off the bounce. Pickleball is played on a court that is one-third the size of a tennis court and has an area called "the kitchen" (a nonvolley zone).

Every Wednesday afternoon, students are learning the rules, practicing their serves, improving their strategy and, most importantly, having fun playing in rotating doubles games.



Lending a Helping Hand

Members of the school community are regularly finding ways to extend a helping hand and give back to the local community. Recently, several members of the Amagansett School Leadership Council took a trip to the East Hampton Food Pantry. The students were welcomed by the food pantry's administrator, Valerie Bando-Meinken, who helped them shelve the 112 cans and boxes

of food that were donated and collected through Amagansett School's annual "Souper Bowl." The students left this special trip encouraged to do more.

"It was amazing being able to help people, and it felt great to do something good for them," said sixth grader Declan Balnis. Fellow student Cameron Dawson agreed with this sentiment, noting how much she enjoyed "giving back to the community."

AMAGANSETT SCHOOL

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With Thanks and Best Wishes

Mary Jo Bennett began her career working with infectious diseases, so it seems quite fitting that she should end it having shepherded the Amagansett School through a global pandemic. After receiving her degree from Georgetown University, MJ worked at the prestigious Harvard University teaching hospital Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston before moving on to North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, where she became the head nurse in the infectious disease department. Finally returning to the East End, she settled into the position of school nurse here in Amagansett.

Fast forward countless skinned knees and loose teeth later, she found herself in the middle of a global pandemic that shut down entire countries, to say nothing of most of the schools in New York State. Many people may have been intimidated by such a crisis,

but not Nurse Bennett. When faced with a response to COVID, and with the support of highly involved administrators, she rolled up her sleeves, put on her shield, mask and gloves, and got down to the business of keeping our school healthy. She credits her early training with keeping our doors open, enabling the Amagansett School to remain live when many schools were virtual.

When asked what she will miss most, she said without hesitation, "All those smiling faces! I will miss children sharing their excitement over things that happen in their daily lives. I will miss how they trusted me to make them feel better. I will miss hearing about the tooth fairy. It really keeps you young."

Students agreed they will miss Nurse Bennett's friendly attitude and dependability, her fun vision and hearing checks, and



hearing their favorite book, "Germes Are Not for Sharing." They will miss her jokes and generosity. As one student remembered, "When someone didn't have food, she was happy to give them some. If someone needed a hair tie, she would always come through. And if someone didn't feel well, she had a cozy room to rest in."

Bidding a Fond Farewell

Every great teacher has to retire one day, and that time has come for Mr. Watson. It is through patience and dedication that he has made a difference in the lives of others. For years, he has devoted himself to educating children, and now he can look back with pride on all he has accomplished.

Mr. Watson worked with arts organizations for decades before applying to the New York Teaching Fellows program. The program recruits people from nontraditional backgrounds to teach in "high needs" subjects in underserved communities. As part of the program, Mr. Watson taught a special education

class in a Harlem middle school during the day. At night, he took classes toward his advanced degree at Pace University.

After he moved to Sag Harbor, he taught at the Child Development Center of the Hamptons and then at Sag Harbor Elementary School. He says that Amagansett School has been the most supportive and rewarding experience in his teaching career, and that he will miss his colleagues immensely.

Although we are sorry to see him go, Mr. Watson can enjoy his retirement secure in the knowledge that he has made a huge difference for the Amagansett School.

