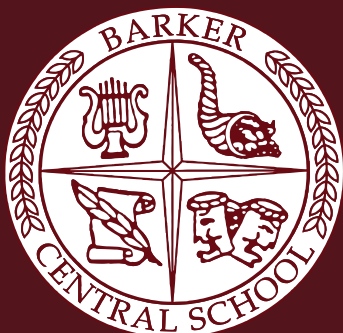


To be a leader in bringing out the best in each individual in our community.

April 2021 - Volume 36 No. 3

# The Banner



## Annual Budget Vote & Board Member Election

Tuesday, May 18, 2021, from 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM  
Herbert F. Ludwig Fine Arts Hall

Social distancing is being practiced and you must wear a mask. To view all budget information please turn to pages 6-10 of this issue or visit [www.barkercsd.net/business](http://www.barkercsd.net/business)



**Aaron Bowerman** displays a valentine which he made for **Assemblyman Norris' Valentines for Seniors** program. Check out page 12 for more pictures and the story.

### In This Issue

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The official website for Barker Central School District news and information:

[www.barkercsd.net](http://www.barkercsd.net)

## Updates from the Board of Education

Dear BCS district residents:

The past year has been quite a challenge for most families and all school districts, but I hope you share my growing sense of optimism for the coming months as we slowly emerge from the shadow of COVID-19. After more than a year of serious disruption to our “normal” lives, we anticipate that we should be returning to a more recognizable school year in the fall. Your school board deeply appreciates the sacrifices and extra efforts to navigate the pandemic on the part of our administration, staff, and district families.

We are pleased to submit the budget for the 2021-2022 school year in the pages of this Banner for your review. You will note that the expense budget is flat from the current school year at \$17,254,712, but maintains all of our current programs for students. We are able to hold the line on spending by further adjusting staffing and expenses to align with student enrollment.

Our school tax levy for the 2021-2022 school year is proposed to increase by 4% in order to help reduce the long-term deficit we have experienced due to lost revenue from the power plant. Our state calculated tax cap is 4.17%, so a supermajority will not be required to pass this budget. The BCS district tax rate will remain one of the lowest in the region.

Your school board and administration are taking other steps to reduce our ongoing operational expenses. We will soon start construction of a 702-kilowatt solar array west of the elementary school and the baseball field on Haight Road. This project is projected to save the district \$65,000 in average annual electricity expenditures after all related costs of the system.

In addition, we have approved a major retrofit of our lighting across all buildings and upgrades to our energy systems that will be installed over the next year or so with projected average annual savings of about \$60,000 after all costs. You will have the opportunity to approve this project at the same time as the budget vote on May 18, 2021. With voter approval, we will get additional state aid that will further enhance the savings to the district.

On the revenue side, the district has applied for special financial assistance from New York State’s Electric Generation Facility Cessation Mitigation Program. This program was created a few years ago to help communities bridge the financial gap from closure of fossil fuel burning power plants. The final decision has not yet been made in Albany, but we understand it is highly likely we will see some revenue from this program starting with the 2021-2022 school year, with declining payments over seven years. This is by no means a permanent solution to our financial challenges resulting from the closure of the power plant, but it will certainly help to slow down or possibly stop the need to utilize reserves in the short term. Long term, we still need NYS to update the formula for state aid to support BCS fairly as compared to other similar rural districts.

The school board recently approved an agreement with the Niagara County Sheriff to allow the installation of a radio tower on school property to support emergency communication in the region and specifically within the BCS campus. Without this tower, emergency radios will not function reliably within district buildings. This is at no cost or revenue to the district, but it will enhance the safety of our school and community.



While the pandemic period has been a very stressful time for nearly everyone, the Barker Central School District has remained focused on providing the best educational experience possible given the limitations imposed by the circumstances. The direction from the state since March 2020 has been quite fluid, resulting in a lot of extra work to plan and then revise such plans, often multiple times. Throughout this difficult chapter, the school board and administration have continued to consider and plan for the long-term needs and success of the district.

Sincerely,

Mr. Randall B. Atwater  
Board of Education President



## SRO Corner

Greetings Somerset/Barker Community.

As a reminder, all student vehicles need a school issued parking permit which can be obtained from the SRO office. All student parking is to be in the parking lot off the gym doors.



Also, at no time is it allowable for anyone to drive a vehicle, including ATVs, snowmobiles, dirt bikes, etc. on school grounds unless it is in an area designated for driving said vehicle. No vehicle should be driven on the grass, ball fields or trails. The trails are designed as foot trails for walking only. The Somerset Police are monitoring the grounds and trails.

Stay Safe,

Somerset Police/Barker School Resource Officers

(Clockwise from upper left): Chief Jon Miller, Officer John Yotter, Officer Steve Gross.

## Cafeteria News - Free Meals Extended Through June 2022

The USDA has extended free meal benefits to all students through June 30, 2022. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced on April 20<sup>th</sup> that, “States and districts wanted waivers extended to plan for safe reopening in the fall. USDA answered the call to help America’s schools and childcare institutions serve high quality meals while being responsive to their local needs as children safely return to their regular routines. This action also increases the reimbursement rate to school meal operators so they can serve healthy foods to our kids. It’s a win-win for kids, parents and schools.”

The USDA press release also included the following from Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona: “Students’ success in the classroom goes hand in hand with their ability to access basic needs like healthy and nutritious meals. “It’s critical that our efforts to reopen schools quickly and safely include programs that provide access to free, healthy meals for our most vulnerable students, particularly those whose communities have been hardest hit by the pandemic. This program will ensure more students, regardless of their educational setting, can access free, healthy meals as more schools reopen their doors for in-person learning.”



## From the Desk of Mr. Carter

Hello Barker students and families. As we approach the conclusion of this school year, we wanted to take a moment to update everyone on where things currently stand with a variety of topics.

First, we would like to announce the transition of Mrs. Erin Goodlander to the high school as the Instructional Support Specialist (ISS). Families may recall that the high school ISS position was previously filled by Mrs. Bundrock and is meant to assist with student concerns and instructional issues in the building. This position is integral to the current Pre-K - 12 structure of the district. We are excited to bring Mrs. Goodlander to the high school.

We are currently working on staffing and scheduling for next school year. Similar to last spring, we will be creating a survey for elementary parents to provide us input on their child's needs for 2021-2022. Please keep an eye on the website as well as the alerts coming from the district in the upcoming weeks.

Unfortunately, we cannot do the normal Elementary Moving Up Day ceremonies due to the current health guidance. Therefore, we will be conducting "Barker: Past, Present & Future Day". In a nutshell, on Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup> each grade level will move back to their previous year's teachers to do a fun activity. Students were unable to complete last year in person with their teachers, so this will give them an opportunity to see each other. Then, each grade level will go meet next year's classroom teachers for another interactive activity, giving them the opportunity to develop a rapport before September. While we will not have the exact classroom assignments at this time, students will be able to meet each grade level's instructors. If your child is fully remote and you would like him/her to participate, please let their classroom teacher know. More details to follow as the event gets closer.

As the conclusion of the high school academic year approaches, students and teachers will begin planning for finals and Regents exams. As per the previous guidance put out, all finals and Regents are optional this year. Students can take whichever exams they feel necessary and either: a) replace two of their lowest marking period grades if the exam grade is higher, or b) if they are failing entirely, pass the exam to earn a course minimum passing average of 70%. This will also allow some of our younger high school students the opportunity to sit for Regents exams, which they have not had the opportunity to do yet.

Graduation, prom and other end of year events for upper classmen are also approaching. The district will be following all NYS Department of Health guidance for these types of events. Graduation is set to be held on the morning of Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony will likely be held outside on the athletic field, similar to last year. Families and seniors will be receiving more specific information soon. Also, the Junior - Senior High School Prom will be held Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup>. Between events like these, athletics, and musical performances, it is good to see school beginning to return to a more engaging atmosphere.

Thank you again for your continued support of the district through these strange times.

Michael Carter  
District Principal, Pre-K - 12

## From the Office of Dr. Kramer

Dear Barker Families,

First and foremost, thank you for your continued support this year. It has truly been a unique and different type of school year. Your flexibility and understanding have helped all of us make it through. At this time last year, I was writing to say we miss seeing everyone and we were looking forward to getting back to face-to-face instruction. While school this year didn't look like what we were hoping for, we were glad to have kids back in the buildings!



We've made a lot of changes this year and will continue with changes for the next school year. The district implemented a 1:1 technology environment. While we hope the COVID guidelines will go away for the fall, our 1:1 device program will not. All students will still have access to a device for school-related work. However, if we are back in school full-time (and let's hope we are), only 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students and up will be taking them home. Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade devices will stay in the classroom.

Teachers will continue to update the curriculum over the upcoming school year to reflect changes to New York State standards in different subject areas. This will take some time and instruction might look different, but this process will help us in achieving our goal of providing a high-quality education to all our students.

For families who have a child receiving Special Education services, thank you begin flexible in transitioning annual meetings from face-to-face to phone conferences. While it's not ideal, we appreciate everyone working with us. Please know that your child's education is our top priority. In the fall, we are hoping to be able to hold meetings face-to-face again.

The biggest change to Special Education comes in when we are going to be holding our annual meetings. To stay compliant with New York State law, we are moving to anniversary date meetings. This means we will be running IEPs from annual meeting to annual meeting, not from the start of the school year to the end of the school year. Eventually, we are going to be shifting the annual meeting to around the same time as the reevaluation meeting, each year. This may seem a bit confusing at first, so let me give you an example. If your child was initially classified on November 7<sup>th</sup>, the annual meeting will be held just before November 7<sup>th</sup> (this will be phased in). We will be combining all reevaluation and annual review meetings into one, to try to minimize the time you might need to take off work.

Once again, stay safe and healthy. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you and have a good summer.

Dr. Mariah Fiona Kramer  
Director of Instructional Services

# Annual Budget Vote

Tuesday, May 18, 2021  
12:00 PM to 8:00 PM  
Herbert F. Ludwig Fine Arts Hall

There are five (5) propositions (see page 7) that you may vote on this year at the annual meeting of qualified voters to be held on Tuesday, May 18, 2021, from 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM prevailing time in the Herbert F. Ludwig Fine Arts Hall building of the district.

## Proposition 2 - Energy Performance Contract (EPC)

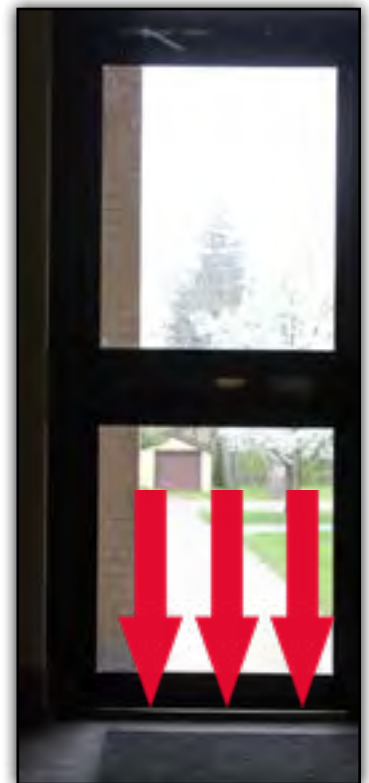
In an effort to control rising energy costs, the Barker Central School District is embarking on energy conservation improvements that will dramatically increase efficiency and save money. The district's Energy Performance Contract (EPC) with Day Automation Systems Inc. calls for:

- Upgrading lighting to LED - light emitting diode – systems to improve efficiency, light quality, and lighting control.
- Reducing infiltration into the building through door weather-stripping.
- Upgrading the building's temperature control system for more effective control of temperature and energy usage, including outdated steam traps that are failing.

The initiative is not subject to voter approval due to the project being self-funded from energy savings, but a voter approved EPC from the community would increase state aid for the project by 10%.

What is an Energy Performance Contract, and how is it beneficial to the district?

The EPC, completed by Day Automation, will fund energy saving building improvements. The EPC allows for the district to cover the costs of energy efficiency upgrades by using the savings generated by these upgrades without increasing taxes. These energy savings are guaranteed, and if the utility targets are not met, Day Automation will make up the difference. New York State will also provide aid for the project and voting yes will allow the district to receive an additional 10% state aid for this project. The energy savings and aid offered by New York State will end up saving the district more than it initially spends. As an added benefit, the district will be able to demonstrate being "Green" and promote energy efficiency to our students who will be the future environmental stewards of the world.



(Clockwise from upper right): Space under doors of center hall in the high school. Lights in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classrooms. Light panel in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom.

**Proposition #1 - Budget**

Shall the Barker Central School District Board of Education, Niagara County, New York be authorized to spend the sum of \$17,254,712 in the total amount set forth in the proposed Budget during the 2021-2022 school year and to levy the necessary tax.

YES NO

**Proposition #2 - Energy Efficiency Upgrades**

Shall the Board of Education of the Barker Central School District, Niagara and Orleans Counties, New York (the "District") be authorized to undertake various energy improvements to various district buildings and facilities in and for said district consisting of the construction and installation of energy efficiency and conservation improvements to the district's buildings and facilities, including, but not limited to, lighting fixture upgrades, building envelope (weatherization) improvements, ceiling replacements, HVAC upgrades, and electrical, plumbing and technology upgrades, including furnishings, equipment, machinery, apparatus, appurtenances and incidental expenses in connection therewith, all at total estimated maximum cost of \$1,600,000, and that said amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of said school district and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law, and in anticipation of such tax, obligations of said school district shall be issued; or alternatively through a lease-purchase financing for such improvements.

YES NO

**Proposition #3 - Barker CSD Board Members – Vote for three (3)**

To elect three (3) members of the Board for a 3-year term commencing July 1, 2021 and expiring on June 30, 2024, to succeed Randall B. Atwater, Virginia Voss, and Candice Gancasz whose terms expire on June 30, 2021.

- Randall B. Atwater
- Virginia Voss
- Candice Gancasz
- Write-in \_\_\_\_\_
- Write-in \_\_\_\_\_
- Write-in \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposition #4 - Public Library**

Shall the funding for the Barker Public Library, which is raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable real property within the Barker Central School District be increased \$78,030 to \$79,590, an additional \$1,560.

YES NO

**Proposition #5 - Library Trustee Members – Vote for two (2)**

To elect two (2) members of the Board of Trustees of the Barker Public Library for a 5-year term, commencing on July 1, 2021, to succeed Pamela Atwater and Marilyn Zaciewski whose terms will expire on June 30, 2021.

- Cynthia L. Harris
- Write-in \_\_\_\_\_
- Write-in \_\_\_\_\_

## Qualifications of a Voter

You qualify as a voter if: you are a citizen of the United States; you have been a resident of the Barker Central School District for at least 30 days prior to the school budget vote and election held on May 18, 2021; you are at least eighteen (18) years of age; you are qualified to register for an election in accordance with Section 5-106 of the Election Law. In addition, you do not need to be a property owner to be eligible to vote.

## Candidates for Board of Education

The Barker Board of Education has three vacant seats for the 2021-2022 school board election. Each seat carries a three-year term. The candidates that returned petitions are listed here in the order they will appear on the ballot:

### **Randall B. Atwater**

My name is Randy Atwater and I reside in the Town of Somerset with my wife, Pam. Our daughters, Anna and Julia, graduated from Barker Central School in 2008 and 2014 respectively.

I am a 1977 graduate of BCS and a 1981 graduate of Union College in Schenectady, NY, with a BS in electrical engineering. After a short engineering career with IBM in Vermont, I returned to the Town of Somerset in 1984. I was in the dried fruit business since 1986, most recently as the international sales manager for Shoreline Fruit, LLC of Traverse City, Michigan. I very recently retired from this career.

I have been a member of the Barker Central School Board of Education since 1988, presently serving as board president. My focus continues to be to secure the long term financial health and stability of the district while preserving and strengthening high quality educational opportunities for the children of the district.

### **Virginia Voss**

My name is Virginia Voss and I am running for a third term on the Barker School Board. I am a customer service manager at Tops in Lockport where I have worked for over 30 years. Twenty years ago my husband, David (a chemistry teacher at Medina HS) and I chose to move our family to Barker so our four children would get an excellent education while also enjoying the benefits of living in a small community.

Being actively involved in the community and its organizations is very important to me. I have been fortunate to be able to volunteer at the school in many capacities, as a parent volunteer and for special functions. It has truly been an honor to serve the community as a member of the school board. I have chosen to run for another term on the board for the same reason I decided to move to Barker. I want to make sure our small community and Barker Central School District remain a viable part of our area to ensure all Barker students continue to receive a high quality education. I want future generations to be able to reap the benefits of a Barker education.

### **Candice Gancasz**

Candice Gancasz has lived in the Barker area for over 33 years. She and her husband Doug are Barker graduates and have raised their 3 daughters, Alexandra, Savanna, and Madison in the Barker School District. Candice has been employed by VanDeMark Chemical Inc., a global chemical manufacturer, for 32 years. Currently Candice holds the position of Marketing & Inside Sales Manager.

Candice has served on the Barker Central School Board of Education for the last 6 years and has found her time served to be a rewarding experience, learning a great deal working with a dedicated team of people who support our children, their education and our entire school community. She would be honored to continue her service to the community, administration, teachers and students of Barker.

Candice feels there is nothing more important than raising our children in a safe, productive environment that prepares students for a great future.





## Detailed Explanation of Expenditure Categories

General Support consists of:

- Board of Education, Central Administration, Finance, Staff, and Special Items. This also includes Maintenance and Operation of Plant, (including all maintenance and grounds salaries, supplies & materials, and utilities) and Central Printing/Mailing and Central Data Processing.

Instruction consists of:

- Instructional Administration and Improvement (principal's salary and supply codes, curriculum development, research and planning, and professional development for all professional staff), Teaching Regular School (all regular school teaching salaries, supplies & materials, equipment, textbooks and BOCES services for regular students, including Occupational Education), School Library and Audiovisual, and Computer-Assisted Instruction (Technology), Attendance, Guidance, Health Services, Psychological Services, Extra-classroom Activities, Athletics and Special Education (teacher salaries, supplies & materials, textbooks, CSE and CPSE Committee expenses, contractual costs, private schools tuition, and BOCES special education costs).

Pupil Transportation consists of:

- All bussing and fuel.

Community Service consists of:

- Summer school and the summer recreation program.



Undistributed consists of:

- Employer contributions to the employees' retirement system and the teachers' retirement system, social security, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, health insurance and terminal leave payments. It also includes payments of principal and interest on school bond payments.

### BARKER BUDGET SUMMARY 2021-22

REVENUES	2021-22	2020-21	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
STATE AID	9,466,700	8,278,683	1,188,017	14.35%
TAX LEVY	4,767,964	6,229,969	-1,462,005	-23.47%
OTHER PROPERTY TAX ITEMS	2,630,696			
PILOT	35,852	33,107	2,745	8.29%
OTHER	328,500	328,500	0	0.00%
FUND BALANCE	25,000	2,384,453	-2,359,453	-98.95%
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>17,254,712</b>	<b>17,254,712</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>

The Calculated Tax Levy Limit for 2021-22 is \$ 4,771,988.

EXPENDITURES	2021-22	2020-21	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
GENERAL SUPPORT	2,050,087	2,045,188	4,899	0.24%
INSTRUCTION	9,697,114	9,611,338	85,776	0.89%
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION	1,466,665	1,439,790	26,875	1.87%
COMMUNITY SERVICE	33,600	33,600	0	0.00%
UNDISTRIBUTED	4,007,246	4,124,796	-117,550	-2.85%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>17,254,712</b>	<b>17,254,712</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>

The District is planning a Capital Outlay Project of \$ 100,000.

The District intends to make mechanical equipment modifications to remedy the system that provides heat to both the pool and domestic water in the Junior and Senior High.

School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2020-21 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2021-22 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2021-22 School Year *										
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 17,254,712	\$ 17,254,712	\$17,031,057										
Increase/Decrease for the 2021-22 School Year		\$ 0.00	-\$ 223,655										
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		0 %	-1.4%										
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.23%											
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 6,362,081	\$ 4,767,964											
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$ 78,030	\$ 79,590											
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$	\$											
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$	\$											
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$ 6,440,111	\$ 4,847,554	\$ 4,847,164										
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 0	\$ 0											
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 6,441,107	\$ 4,771,988											
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$ 6,362,081	\$ 4,767,964											
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$ 79,026	\$ 4,024											
Administrative Component	\$ 1,573,919	\$ 1,594,948	\$ 1,574,548										
Program Component	\$ 14,059,118	\$ 14,120,474	\$ 14,077,219										
Capital Component	\$ 1,621,675	\$ 1,539,290	\$ 1,379,290										
<p>* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2021-22 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.</p> <p>Elimination of the Capital Outlay Project as well as the purchase of equipment in the 2021-22 school year. Some smaller reductions in the purchase of materials and supplies as well as conference attendance.</p>													
<p>** List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Description	Amount		\$		\$		\$		\$
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NOTE: Please submit an electronic version (Word or PDF) of this completed form to: [emscmgts@nysed.gov](mailto:emscmgts@nysed.gov)

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2021-22 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings<sup>1</sup>

\$443.00

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2021-22 by the qualified voters of the Barker School District, Niagara County, New York, will be held in the Herbert F. Ludwig Fine Arts Hall in said district on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 between the hours of 12:00 pm and 8:00 pm, prevailing time in the Barker Jr/ Sr High School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

1. The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.



## First Grade Receives Visits from Mystery Readers

Throughout the month of March, first graders were treated to read alouds from mystery readers. Volunteer readers submitted 5 clues about themselves that the students used to guess who they thought the reader of the day was going to be. Each day, the suspense grew while students waited with anticipation for the special guest reader. In all, 18 readers surprised the children with stories that made them laugh, made them wonder and left them wanting to hear more. First grade teachers **Miss Bisland, Miss Hinton, and Mrs. Nobles**, would like to thank **Mrs. Podgers, Mrs. Phillips, Mr. Carter, Mrs. Atwater, Mrs. Lakeman, Mr. Reimer, Mrs. Schwab, Mrs. Thibault, Mrs. Donovan, Mrs. Ober, Mr. Burke, Mrs. Zablocki, Dr. Kramer, Mrs. Denny, Mrs. Martell, Mr. Costello, Mr. Cantella, and Mr. Pyskaty** for lending their talents to make March a month to remember.



*(Top-bottom): Mrs. Zablocki reads "Sam & Dave Dig a Hole." Mrs. Martell received help from Mrs. Thibault and Mrs. Nobles to read and act out "Thrym's Poem."*

## Thirsty for Clues Riddle Challenge

Riddles are for more than having fun. Riddles help to promote critical thinking and problem solving skills, help with comprehension, and build vocabulary. During the month of March on Mondays and Thursdays students read scavenger hunt clues that led them to a piece of a bigger riddle that needed to be solved. When all the riddle pieces were found, students submitted their answers via Google Forms or a paper submission. All correct answers were entered into a drawing for a water bottle.

Students had a blast searching for riddle clues around the BCS campus, discussing what the answer could be or couldn't be, and admiring the water bottles that were displayed in the Pratt foyer. At the month's end, 50 students had won water bottles that had been generously donated. All participating students received a graphic sticker. The riddles got Pratt Elementary thinking Spring. Answers to the riddles were:

- Kite (grades Pre-K - 2)
- Tree (grades 3 - 6)



*Winners of the Thirsty for Clues Riddle Challenge (L-R): Hunter Greene, Emily Sweeney, Chace Atwater, Brooke Hirschman, Jayden Rinker-Lewis, Areanna Reinard, Hannah Monaco, Elloise Buyea, Jillian Maines, Madelyn Woronowski, Piper McAdoo, Noralie Pierce, Danni Raduns. For additional winners and pictures please visit the [Headlines & Features area on the Barker homepage](#).*

## Spreading Kindness on Valentine's Day

**Principal Carter**, promoted kindness throughout Pratt Elementary for Valentine's Day. High school volunteers, **Meredith Black** and **Angelita Seager** along with **SRO Herlofson** and **Mrs. Thibault** delivered pink, red and white sweet treats to students. Fully remote students were surprised to receive treats delivered to them by the dedicated aide staff who make home deliveries every Wednesday.



(Above, L-R): **Mr. Carter** helps **Sirena Broecker** open her ice cream. **Mrs. LaGreca**, **Mrs. Hillman**, **Mrs. Goodwin**, and **Mrs. Niethe** prepare deliveries.

## Assemblyman Norris' Valentines for Seniors Program

Students were asked by **Assemblyman Norris** to craft handmade Valentines for Seniors that would bring joy to residents at local nursing homes and those served by Meals on Wheels. Teacher, **Mr. Norris**, arranged for his brother, Assemblyman Norris, to be a guest speaker for his 6<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies classes. Students heard first hand from the Assemblyman how their volunteerism would help cheer up seniors who have been isolated from friends and family since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.



(Above, L-R): Valentine made by **Melodi Murphy**. **Assemblyman Norris** on a Zoom call with **Mr. Norris' 6<sup>th</sup> grade class**.

## Easter Egg Fun at Pratt and Barker Jr.-Sr. High School

During the last week of school before spring recess, the Junior High School Student Council sponsored a coloring contest and Easter Egg hunt for Pre-K and kindergarten. The students also planted jellybeans in a pot that grew into treats.

The first graders helped the Easter Bunny and hippity hopped through the high school hallways, hanging eggs with the names of Jr.-Sr. High School students on them. Students were informed that when they found the egg with their name on it, they were to bring the egg to the high school office during lunch or study hall for a special Easter treat. The gesture was one of thanks from the entire first grade. First grade students and teachers have appreciated the willingness of the older students to help out the elementary students.



(Top-bottom, L-R): **Waylon Dent** with his jellybean pot, **Larry Dent** checks out his jellybean pot, Coloring contest winners: **Nathaniel Quinn**, **Olivia Silversmith**, and **Leonardo Sanchez-Chavez**. Sample of egg hunt egg hidden on a wall in the Jr.-Sr. High School building by a 1<sup>st</sup> grader.

## SPARK Activities at Pratt Elementary

What is a SPARK? A Student Performing Acts of Responsibility and Kindness. During SPARK activities, students and teachers take time to celebrate their SPARK-like behavior. Opportunities to fly a kite, make a custom stamp, design and create Easter themed STEM projects, such as a “Peep”-achute (parachute), constructing forts, and relaxing with a movie and popcorn were a few of the activities students in grades Pre-K - 6 participated in over the course of the last 14 weeks. Pratt Elementary is looking forward to continuing the “Be a SPARK” mantra.

(L-R): **Ayla Riches** holds down the fort. **Bryson Bouter** flies a kite. **Peyton Hirschman, Drew LaGreca, Jack Schwab, Jackson Jordan** work together with plastic Easter eggs.



## Finale Performed by Dance Class

16 students completed an after school dance class in early March. **Mrs. Phillips** organized the class and a routine titled Dynamite was performed and recorded as a finale. Please visit the [Headlines & Features area on the Barker homepage](#) to view their video.



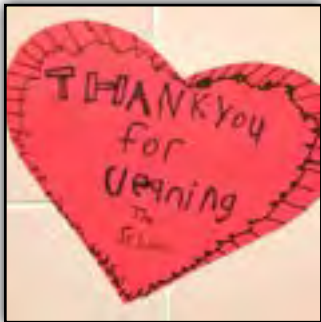
Front (L-R): **Meredith Black, Chloe Duchow, Naomi Bish, Arnie Sturtevant, Lizzie Hopkins, Elise Monaco, Mrs. Phillips, Sophia Pavlock.** Back (L-R): **Brooke Dunkelberger, Addyson Weller, Brionikah Mussell, Areanna Reinard, Grayson Prynny, Jillian Maines, Olivia Voss, Madyson Flint.** Not pictured: **Cayvon Heigl.**

## Be a Book SPARK

What could an unused snack machine be turned into? A book machine at Pratt Elementary. Students who consistently work to meet the SPARK expectations may be rewarded with a “Be a Book SPARK” coupon, redeemable for 25 cents from the Pratt Library. The quarter is then used to select a book from the vending machine. Thank you to **Dr. Kramer** for sparking this out of the box idea. Librarian **Mrs. Morrow** and aide, **Mrs. LaGreca**, have enjoyed watching students thoughtfully choose their books. First grader, **Liam Lanighan** was the first student to be rewarded with a “Be a Book SPARK” coupon.



**Liam Lanighan** displays his book selection from the book machine located outside the Pratt Elementary Library.



## NHS Organizes Custodial Appreciation Week

National Honor Society members under the direction of advisor, **Mr. O’Sullivan**, organized a custodial appreciation event. The NHS members realized the time and effort each and every day that our custodial staff puts in to create a clean, healthy, and safe environment. The NHS students planned all aspects of the event making posters, preparing goodie bags, and also asked to include the Pratt Elementary School students in the project. **Ella Gooding**, **Elinore Voss**, **Carla Stoloski**, and **Thomas Jowdy** all took the lead on the project to organize and create the week long appreciation and celebration. Elementary students created signage offering words of appreciation to the custodians. The custodial staff has taken extra care to keep the buildings clean and safe for all of us.



(Top-Bottom, L-R): Student created poster celebrating Custodial Appreciation Week. **Ella Gooding**, **Carla Stoloski**, **Elinore Voss**, and **Thomas Jowdy** organized the custodial appreciation event. Poster by **DeDe Taliaferro**.

## Creative Writing Contest Winners

Students wrote poems and short stories and created illustrations to go with their writing in **Miss Feltz's** Art classes. The Aurora Women's Club, the local sponsor of the General Federation of Women's Clubs Creative Writing Contest, announced the following students won awards in the Greater Western District:

- **Ariana Peace** (grade 11), 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Category 4 for Short Story - "Cling".
- **Sarina Drake** (grade 11), 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Category 4 for Poetry - "Calm Before the Storm".
- **Cole Carnes** (grade 9), Honorable Mention in Category 4 for Poetry - "Dog".

"I write poems a lot at home and to be recognized for one feels amazing. I love writing about my dog because she is beautiful which is exactly what art is supposed to be. The poem took a long time to write, but the subject was clear to me," said Cole Carnes.

**Carson Costello** (grade 3), who was not part of Miss Feltz's class, but submitted an entry independently, received a 3<sup>rd</sup> place award in Category 2 for Short Story - "My First Triple".



(Top-bottom, L-R): "Dog" by Cole Carnes, Sarina Drake, Mr. Carter & Cole Carnes, Mr. Carter & Carson Costello, Mr. Carter & Ariana Peace.



## Commendation Awards for Lopez Paz and Detschner

The 2021 Congressional Art Competition for New York's 27<sup>th</sup> District was April 24<sup>th</sup>. Each spring, the Congressional Institute sponsors a nationwide high school visual art competition to recognize and encourage artistic talent in the nation and in each congressional district. The United States House of Representatives recognized the following students from **Miss Feltz's** Barker Central High School Portfolio and Studio Art class with Commendation Awards for their artwork: **Lisbet Lopez Paz** for her drawing "Looking Up" and **Alexzander Detschner** for his printmaking "The Patriot". Zander says, "I chose an eagle for my printmaking project because I like what it represents, freedom and bravery. I named the eagle 'The Patriot' because it continues to stand and represent the flag, our fallen heroes, freedom, and the United States of America".



(Top-bottom): **Alexzander Detschner's** "The Patriot." "Looking Up" by **Lisbet Lopez Paz**.



(Top-bottom, L-R): **Melanie Tatu** - Ceramic Bear, **Alyssa Thompson** - Personal Logo, **Nicholas Guevara** - Ceramic Wolf, **Angelita Seager** - Watercolor Pen and Ink, **Julia Munn** - Ceramic Palm Tree, **Gabrielle Carpenter** - Printmaking. For more student artwork please visit the [photo gallery page](#).



## Winter Sports Return, Initially Without Fans

January saw the return of swim meets and February brought basketball games. Throughout most of the winter season, swim competition took place virtually. Teams competing swam in their home pool against an opponent doing the same. Race results were kept online via a shared scoresheet and posted online. During boys sectionals, and for the first time during the 2021 season, swimmers were permitted to compete against each other in the same pool.

The protocols used by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, Section VI, and the Niagara-Orleans League created new challenges for parents and fans to watch the athletes. When winter sports returned, no spectators were allowed. As a result, the Barker Raiders Athletics Network was formed to live stream all home events of the Barker Raiders. Computer and video equipment was used to broadcast the swim meets and basketball games over YouTube. Across the N-O League each school made a decision on how to broadcast it's own home events. YouTube, Facebook Live, and school websites were solutions chosen by districts. All seven schools provided some type of solution for those at home to watch the events. Barker live streamed each event and then made the recording available to view on demand after the conclusion of the event. No in person scouting was allowed so the recorded content was also used by coaches as a scouting tool.

February 22<sup>nd</sup> **Ryan Santarsiero** was crowned N-O League Champion in the 200 Individual Medley during the all league swim meet. Santarsiero finished the race in a time of 2:14.53. Two days later spectators were allowed to attend sporting events. Although the limit was two spectators per athlete, the ability to view competition on the internet existed through the end of the season.

In March, after the winter season concluded, two Barker teams received Scholar Athlete recognition: **Boys Swim** and **Girls Swim**. Also, **Sydney Luckman**, basketball, received N-O League 1<sup>st</sup> Team honors.

All Western New York Scholar Athletes for the fall were announced in late December. **Lena Fazzolari**, Field Hockey, and **Carla Stoloski**, Cross Country were both selected for this Section VI award.

The combined **Varsity Football** team from Roy-Hart, Barker, and Lyndonville, which played 8-man this spring, just wrapped up the fall season II campaign with a win over South Seneca in the final game. The RBL team also competed against teams from Holley, Perry, Pembroke, and Charles Finney/Northstar.

The spring season is now upon us as baseball, softball, tennis, and track & field began on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Limitations of two spectators per athlete are still in place for spring sports which run through mid to late June. Spectator passes will be distributed to athletes to share with their family members.

Congratulations to all of our athletes for completing the winter season and Fall Season II. Thank you to athletes, parents, and fans for their cooperation in following the guidelines and supporting a safe return to play.





(Clockwise from upper left): **Lena Fazzolari**, Field Hockey, All Western New York Scholar Athlete. **Sydney Luckman**, Basketball - Niagara-Orleans League 1<sup>st</sup> Team. **Ryan Santarsiero**, Swimming - Niagara-Orleans League Individual Medley Champion. **Carla Stoloski**, Cross Country - All Western New York Scholar Athlete.

For additional athletics information regarding schedules, sports stories, rosters, special recognition, streaming and recorded events, historical information, and links to New York State Public High School Athletic Association and the Niagara-Orleans League, please visit our athletics homepage:

[www.barkercsd.net/athletics](http://www.barkercsd.net/athletics)

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**Barker Central School District Mission Statement:** We will provide a school environment that fosters respect, compassion, tolerance, and nurtures life-long learners who make meaningful contributions to society.

Dear Barker Learning Community,

We are extremely excited for the remainder of the 20-21 school year as we continue to bring back as many kids as we can for more in-person in a safe manner within the ever-changing guidance from New York State. To say that getting to this point was a challenge is an understatement. However, here we are, continuing to provide the greatest education possible for our kids. We thank all of the community for your continued support.

As we continue to look forward to the 21-22 school year, we are well into planning for a full return to school with all of our kids starting in September. It is our intention to return to as close to normal as possible starting in the fall. However, as has been the case since this pandemic started more than 14 months ago, things will likely change many times before we return in September. With this in mind, please be assured that we will communicate necessary and important information to you as it becomes applicable and timely via automated phone calls, and we will also continue to post various updates on our district website. These are the two most efficient ways for us to communicate with our learning community. Our goal is to inform you as soon as we can once we have completed information to pass along.

As we wrap up our 20-21 school year, we again want to thank the entire greater Barker community for supporting each of our students and their learning this past year. All of our students have persevered through these unprecedented times together and will become much stronger in the end. We are so proud of their accomplishments and we look forward to another successful school year next year.

Sincerely,



Jacob Reimer, Superintendent



**Barker Central School District**  
**1628 Quaker Road**  
**Barker, NY 14012**

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