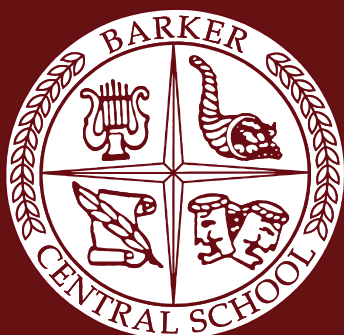


To be a leader in bringing out the best in each individual in our community.

May 2024 - Volume 39 No. 3

# The Banner



## Annual Budget Vote & Board Member Election

Tuesday, May 21, 2024 from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Herbert F. Ludwig Fine Arts Hall

To view all budget information please turn to pages 16-21 of this issue or visit [www.barkercsd.net/business](http://www.barkercsd.net/business)



(L-R): **Gabriel Nestoros** and **Andreas Nestoros** at the Storrs All High Art Show at the Kenan Center.

### In This Issue

District News	1-7, 15, 24
Student Artwork	4-7, 10, 23-24
SRO Corner	8
Jr.-Sr. High School	1, 8-11, 13
Pratt Elementary	11, 12, 15
Athletics	14
Budget & BOE Information	1, 16-21
Barker Public Library	22
Community Education	23

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

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

## FROM THE BOARD ROOM

Dear BCS District Residents,

It has been a very productive year for our School District and the future looks bright.

We made great progress towards the District goals adopted for the years 2018-2023, so it was time to update the goals for the next few years. Details can be found on the school website. You will notice that the focus of the new goals has concentrated even more on different aspects of student learning and performance:

- Increase student engagement in the learning process
- Improve literacy for all learners
- Improve instructional outcomes for all students

To support these goals, the teachers and administration have been working for many months to better document and align all curriculum in the District. This will be an ongoing effort as state requirements and testing are always evolving.

Our financial condition has improved significantly over the past several years. This is due in part to careful budgeting and spending and long-term planning. In recent years, we have also seen significant increases in state aid which are very helpful after many years of inadequate funding resulting from the closure of the power plant.

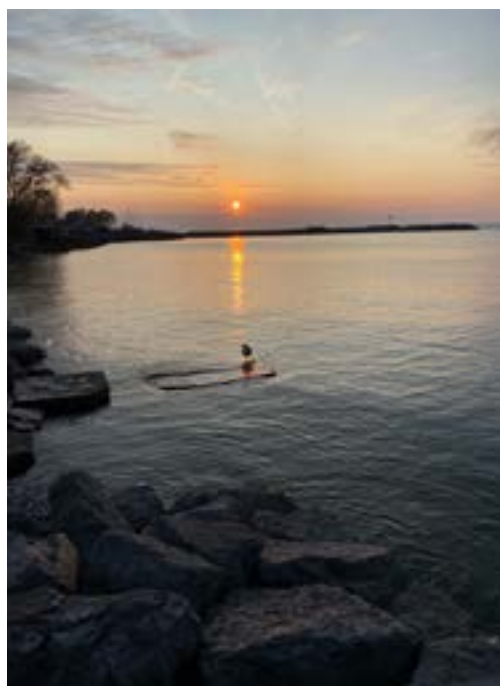
As you may know, construction has begun on a \$25 million capital project that is being paid for with reserve funds and state financial support. This major project will impact our students and community in many positive ways for years to come.

Over the past year we made a very thoughtful transition in our sports identity from the Barker Raiders to the Barker Bulldogs. (A change was required by state law.) Student and community input was sought along the way and the new mascot adopted recently was based on a student drawing selected from many inspired designs.

The budget we are presenting for your consideration represents an increase in spending of 3.85% over the current year for a total of \$18,895,718. This amount will support continuation of all current programs. Several new courses are also being offered with virtually no budget impact. The local school tax levy is projected to increase 2.8% for a total of \$5,157,400. While we are anticipating another significant increase in state aid, we need a modest increase in local taxes to move towards a long-term sustainable budget. As you may know, we are getting some supplemental state support from the Energy Cessation Mitigation Fund, but this decreases each year and will expire completely in another four years. More details about the budget will be found in this edition of the Banner.

By nature, education is focused on the future. Our staff, administration and school board are constantly planning for the short and long-term future of our District. We have much to look forward to and appreciate your support.

Randall B. Atwater  
Barker Central School District Board of Education President



Sara Meza Ray - Sunset Photo, The End.



## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Barker Learning Community,

I hope this edition of *The Banner* finds you all well and getting ready for the upcoming summer months. As always, we have a lot going on around campus and I hope you have a chance to see all the great things our students are doing, both in and out of the classroom here in Barker.

If you have been on campus this spring, I am sure you have seen all the construction happening. Phase 1 of the project approved by voters in December, 2022 is fully underway and currently right on schedule. The items currently under construction, including the parking lot renovation and reconfiguration, the multipurpose field, tennis courts, boilers, and some window work is set to be done on time by the start of school in the fall. Be on the lookout for scheduled events with the new multipurpose field, including some football games, soccer, and field hockey this fall. We will be having some night games and we hope to see you all there enjoying the new facilities and watching our student athletes compete.

Our parking lots are a significant portion of the improvements being made with this project. Virtually all the parking lots in the District are being renovated to some degree and there will be some significant changes to how the traffic flow will be occurring around the building. The biggest change will be how parking and traffic work in front of the 1911 building and in front of the building along Haight Road. As we get closer to school starting, please check the District website for more information on how these new traffic patterns will flow to make the first days of school as seamless as possible.

We are still waiting on the final Department of Education review of Phase 2 of the project. We hope to begin construction on that work, which includes all the interior work of creating a single point of entry to District buildings, renovating our technology instruction area, Family and Consumer Sciences, Library Media Center, and a number of classrooms to name a few, starting in the fall with a full completion by October 2025. We hope to get it all done prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year, but it may take a little longer to complete.

Our transportation services will be changing a little this fall too. The only thing you will probably notice is that our large busses will be much quieter than they have been in the past. As you may recall, the District, in partnership with Student Transportation of America, our transportation provider, secured grant funding to replace 12 of our current large capacity busses with electric busses. These busses look no different than our current busses from the outside, but you will surely hear a difference without the guttural sound of a diesel engine. Just about the only thing you can hear from these busses is the sound of the tires rolling over the pavement, and not much more. We expect these busses to be in services at some point before the snow flies, but we are not sure quite when they will be rolling exactly.

These are just a few of the new and exciting things going on and I can't wait to see where we go next with everything that is happening for our students and larger community.

Lastly, please don't forget to vote on the District budget, Board seats, and the Barker Public Library propositions on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 in the Ludwig Auditorium between noon and 8 pm!

Sincerely,

Jacob L. Reimer, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools



## FROM THE DESK OF MRS. LOVE

Dear Barker Central School Community,

This school year is flying by so quickly! There have been so many amazing things going on at Barker this year. As we head into the last few weeks of school, there are some important dates and information that we would like to share with you.

PreK registration is now open for students who are 4 years old or will be turning 4 before December 1, 2024. You can find all of the registration information on our website. Our program is full-day, from 7:50 am to 2:30 pm. Placement is not guaranteed and spots will go to District residents before non-resident students. Bussing is available for all students who are District residents. Please share this information with any families you know who have a child eligible for PreK this year. Please contact Rachel Anderson at (716) 795-3237 for any assistance in the registration process for students of all grade levels.

Moving Up Day for Pratt Elementary will take place on Friday, June 21, 2024, which will be the last day of school for elementary students. More information regarding the specific details of the event will be shared as we get closer to the end of the school year. The last day of school for the 7-12 students will be on Thursday, June 13, 2024. Jr.-Sr. High students are expected to return to school to take their Regents exams during the last few weeks of June. The official dates and times for students to report will be forthcoming. The end of school year dates are subject to change based on any official changes to the school calendar. If this occurs, then information will be sent home to families. Commencement this year will take place on Friday, June 28, 2024, at 7:00 pm to celebrate the successes of the Class of 2024.

Similar to last year, we will first be running our District-wide summer school program for students in grades PreK-8, and second credit recovery for students in grades 9-12. The program will begin with students on Tuesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, and end on Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup>. Students will be invited to participate in the program based on academic need with recommendation from their teachers. The PreK-8 program will include academic support in ELA and math and extracurricular enrichment opportunities in STEM experiences, P.E. and swim programming, and art activities.

Please save the date for Wednesday, August 28, 2024, from 5:30 to 7:00 pm for the Grades 1-12 Welcome Back Night/Open House event. The PreK/K students will have a separate Welcome Back Day on Thursday, August, 29, 2024 from 1:00 to 2:30 pm. The first day of school for all students will be on Tuesday, September 3, 2024.

As always, thank you for your continued support of this learning community and your dedication to our Barker students.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Micaela M. Love  
PK-12 Principal  
mlove@barkerbsd.net  
(716) 795-3832



(L-R): Victoria Poyfair - Drawing, *The Beach*. Madison Stephan - Drawing, *The Turtle*.



## FROM THE DESK OF MR. CARTER

Hello Barker Learning Community. We are quickly approaching our annual budget vote. This article contains some information regarding the 2024-2025 budget.

Our goals with this budget are to:

1. Ensure the long-term fiscal health of the District by building revenues and reserves for future funding gaps
2. Continue to fund all current programming
3. Continue social-emotional supports for our students



The total budget for the 2024-2025 school year is \$18,895,718. A detailed look at the year over year changes to the budget is available on page 18.

The local property tax levy will be \$5,157,400, which is an increase of 3.8% from the current year. Local property taxes account for only about 27% of our revenue; we are very dependent on New York State Aid for the vast majority of our income. However, districts have very little control over the amount of funding we receive from New York State.

We encourage District residents who wish to learn more about the budget to attend the public hearing on Monday, May 13, 2024 at 6:30 pm in the high school auditorium. The annual vote will be held on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 from Noon to 8:00 pm in the auditorium.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you for your continued support of the School District.

Sincerely,

Michael Carter  
Business Administrator  
mcarter@barkerksd.net



(L-R): **Hailey Dodge** - Painting, Summer Flowers. **Xyon Weese** - Painting, Rosa Rojas. **Kaylee Stoll** - Drawing, Wheels of Floral.



## FROM THE DESK OF MR. LEARO

Dear Barker School Community,

My first few months have been busy, productive and exciting. I've had the wonderful opportunity to meet many of you and look forward to continuing to immerse myself in the Barker community. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments regarding Instructional and Special Education services at [mlearo@barkerksd.net](mailto:mlearo@barkerksd.net) or (716) 795-3350.

As we approach the close of the 2023-2024 school year I would like to share some important information regarding Special Education:

Special education programs and services provide equity and access for students with disabilities to be involved in and to participate and progress in the general education curriculum. The New York State Education Department has established a blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities. This statewide framework is intended to help guide improvement of instruction to prepare students for success beginning in the preschool years and to lay the foundation for post-secondary readiness and success.

1. Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own education goals and plans (Students participate in IEP meetings, monitor their progress towards academic & social goals, engage in career planning and selection of courses of study).
2. Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child (Parents understand what their child is expected to know, engage in frequent, respectful, and open conversation about the educational needs of their child with school staff and have the information they need about effective strategies to support their child's learning).
3. Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum (This is evident when IEPs are developed in consideration of grade level standards and are implemented and reviewed by educators, families and students to ensure that students are meeting their annual goals, students with disabilities receive instructional materials in alternative formats as necessary).
4. Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities (This is evident when teachers develop lessons that allow multiple entry points and multiple modes of engagement for students with diverse needs, teachers assess students' understanding of lessons to improve and target instruction to student needs).
5. Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.
6. Schools provide high quality inclusive programs and activities.
7. Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.

Here at Barker we strive to educate all students to reach their fullest potential and experience success. I have been impressed by the dedication, hard work, and commitment of the entire Barker School Community in educating and supporting all of our students and their needs.

Mark Learo  
Director of Instructional Services/Assistant Principal  
[mlearo@barkerksd.net](mailto:mlearo@barkerksd.net)  
(716) 795-3350



**Cherish Potter - Watercolor Painting, Easter Bluebird.**

## FROM THE DESK OF MR. CORNWELL

Happy Spring from the Office of Curriculum and Professional Development!! Hopefully this update finds you enjoying our Western New York spring weather, with the promise of warmer and sunnier weather to come.

The Professional Development Days held on March 8<sup>th</sup> and April 8<sup>th</sup> for our teachers and staff were a success. Feedback from the teachers and staff who participated was very favorable. The primary focus of both days was moving the work in our District strategic plan forward. As a reminder our three main goals within this plan are:

1. Increase Student Engagement in the Learning Process: Through a collaborative process, stakeholders will be empowered to improve student engagement in the learning process through continual improvement.
2. Improve Literacy for all Learners to be prepared for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Through a collaborative process, stakeholders will create an environment that supports increased student literacy including reading, writing, comprehension, and communication in all forms.
3. Improve Instructional Outcomes for all Students: To sustain and expand student academic success by collaboratively reviewing data and developing data-driven processes which continuously foster improvements in instructional areas that impact student learning and achievement.

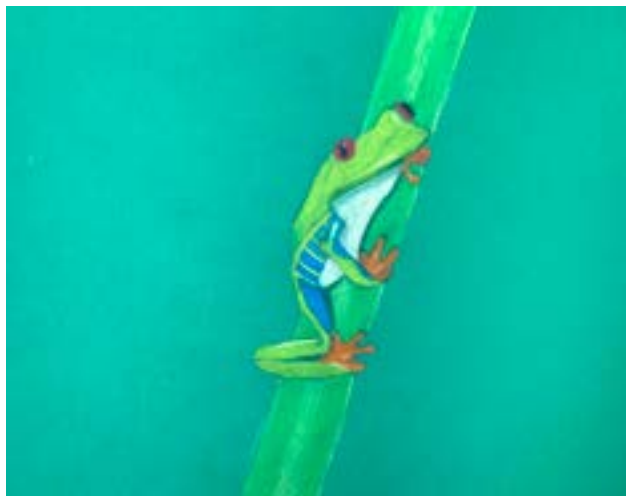
A specific focus during these days was on goal #3 and the collaborative effort of reviewing data and developing data-driven processes that emphasize continuous improvement in student learning.

In addition to the above, over the past year and a half, our teachers have been working on a program to “map out” their curriculum and instruction over the entire school years’ time. As part of this work, grade level and content area teachers are developing a sequential plan that indicates the order in which content will be taught and learned, as well as the in-depth planning of instructional units of study. While this work is ongoing and continuous, our goal is to have the vast majority of this work completed prior to the start of the 2024-2025 school year.

If you have any questions regarding your child’s educational program, or the instructional program of our school, don’t hesitate to reach out to me by email or phone.

Yours in education,

Christian Cornwell  
Coordinator of Curriculum & Professional Learning/AP  
ccornwell@barkerccsd.net  
(716) 795-3388



(Top-bottom): **Cheyenne Rouse** - Drawing, Green Frog. **Lucas DerSarkissian** - Watercolor Painting, Oceanside Pier.



## SRO CORNER

Greetings to our Barker/Somerset Community.

Let's all remember to help keep our school safe and promote a healthy environment. In the school we participate in fire drills, lockouts, lockdowns, and shelter in place drills. The purpose is to safely practice what to do if a real situation occurs.

Parents, if your student has a question about school safety you cannot answer, you can contact the SRO at (716) 255-0503. We would love to hear from you.

With the arrival of warmer weather and more pedestrian/vehicle traffic, we all have to be vigilant. This is especially true in the school parking lots, bus loop, and student drop off area. Students are on foot coming and going to busses and cars. Driving with attention and care goes a long way to help with safety. Student drivers should also be reminded to drive safely and pay attention to road rules and stopped school buses.

Lastly, we all need to remember: If you see or hear something suspicious, please say something.

Barker School SRO's/Somerset Town Police



(Top-Bottom and L-R): Chief Jon Miller, Officer John Yotter, Officer Allison Parente.

## PI DAY CONTESTS

The results from the Jr.-Sr. High School annual Pi Day memorizing contest were:

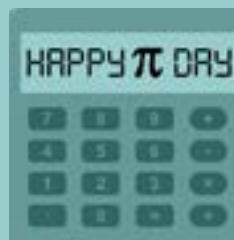
- 1<sup>st</sup>: Salvador Brinson
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Riley Marciszewski
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Parker Johnson
- 4<sup>th</sup>: Jillian Fisk
- 5<sup>th</sup>: Julia Kalynycz

Some students who participated were able to memorize close to 200 digits. All of the top 5 won \$3.14 on their lunch account and Salvador Brinson was awarded a Pi Day shirt.



Pi Day Top 5 (L-R): Salvador Brinson, Riley Marciszewski, Parker Johnson, Jillian Fisk, Julia Kalynycz.

The following students found an Einstein picture on March 14<sup>th</sup> and won a mini pie: Salvador Brinson, Dominic Cimato, Ruth Ann Daily, Caden Garcia, William Jaques, Melodi Murphy, Rachel Samson, Arnie Sturtevant, and Cheyann Walker.





## WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 25-28, 2024 a group of students from the Class of 2028 traveled to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C. for the annual 8<sup>th</sup> grade field trip. Mrs. Hambruch, Mrs. Weller, Mr. DerSarkissian, and Mr. O'Sullivan accompanied 43 students to visit national landmarks and experience history of our country.



On Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup> the group departed Barker Central School for the Gettysburg National Military Park Visitor's Center. The first leg of the trip included a tour of the battlefield, dinner at Dobbin House which was a stop on the Underground Railroad, and the Jennie Wade House. Mary Virginia "Jennie" Wade was the only civilian killed by gunfire during the Battle of Gettysburg.

On Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, the group, dressed in their Barker Central School District class shirts, boarded their bus and headed to Washington, D.C. where they first toured the White House. Next up were stops at the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and World War II Memorial. The full day of activity wrapped up with an interactive comedy show, Shear Madness, at the Kennedy Center.

Viewing monuments and memorials continued on Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. The group would embark on a walking exploration of several key destinations of the National Mall. A tour at the Holocaust Museum offered a unique experience for the Barker contingent as they were greeted by BCS 2002 graduate Christopher Wayner who donated tickets for everyone on the trip. Mr. Wayner presented to the students why the Holocaust was such an important part of history and why it should never be forgotten. As the students continued their journey, they were able to take in the beauty of the cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin. The day also included stops at the Korean War Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial before attending an NBA game between the Washington Wizards and Brooklyn Nets. The Nets won an exciting game in overtime by a score of 122-119.

The final day of the trip on Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> began with a stop at the National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia where the group took a walking tour to view the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, President John F. Kennedy's Memorial Grave, President William Howard Taft's Memorial Grave, Arlington House to see the Robert E. Lee Memorial, and then the Military Women's Memorial.



Some students were able to finance their trip completely through fundraising efforts that included a spaghetti dinner and basket raffle, the sale of cookies and pies from Carson's Deli & Bakery, discount cards for The Grain House of Barker, and the sale of Christmas gift cards.

## KELSEY & LEMISE RECEIVE AWARDS FOR THEIR ARTWORK

The 37<sup>th</sup> Storrs All High Art Show at the Kenan Center Gallery in Lockport featured work by students from 28 high schools from across Western New York. Eva Kelsey was awarded Best Use of Color with her colored pencil drawing, *Octopus* (pictured at far right). “I wanted to challenge myself to add more texture and detail to my drawings, so I thought an octopus would be perfect,” explained Kelsey. “They are one of my favorite sea creatures.”

Kylie Lemise received the Merit Award for her scratch art, *A Real Life Dragon* (pictured at right). Lemise stated, “I was in my science class petting the class lizard named Mr. Kipling, and was inspired by his scales and just the way they felt and looked and drew this piece. I’ve always loved dragons. I just never thought I would get to see a real one.”



## HS CONCERT BAND RECEIVES GOLD MEDAL

Matthew Goodwin (baritone), Michael Kalynycz (percussion), and Lillia Peace (trumpet) all performed as members of the Niagara County All-County Band and Jazz Band at Lockport High School on February 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>. Riley Marciszewski (baritone saxophone) also performed the same weekend at Lockport HS as part of the All-County Junior High School Jazz Band.

On Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, the Barker High School Concert Band (pictured below) competed in front of two judges for the New York State Student Music Association Festival at Spencerport High School and received a gold medal.





## WILLY WONKA KIDS! & ANASTASIA HIT BARKER STAGE

*Willy Wonka Kids!* was on stage in the Herbert F. Ludwig Auditorium on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. Elementary students who were part of the cast and crew:

- Willy Wonka: Chace Atwater
- Candy Man: Kasey Thering
- Charlie Bucket: Quincy Atwater
- Mrs. Bucket: Lily Ecker
- Mr. Bucket: William Burzynski
- Grandma Josephina: Shawnalee Hill
- Grandma Georgina: Jordyn Meyers
- Grandpa George: Blake Barr
- Grandpa Joe: Daniel Aguilera
- James: Jordyn Jones
- Matilda: Lilah Kelemen
- Phineous Trout: Tierza Rose
- Augustus Gloop: Kian Baker
- Mrs. Gloop: Nora Gow
- Veruca Salt: Hannah Monaco
- Mr. Salt: Carson Costello
- Violet Beauregarde: Emilia Farina
- Mrs. Beauregarde: Amelia Ross
- Mike Teavee: Brayden Gregory
- Ms. Teavee: Tessa Seward
- Oompa-Loompa 1: Ayla Riches
- Oompa-Loompa 2: Lydia Atwater
- Oompa-Loompa 3: Luca Dupont
- Oompa-Loompas: Lily Ecker, Liam Garcia, Lilah Kelemen, Isabella Marvin, Jordyn Meyers, Ariane Watts, Makenzie Hill, Shawnalee Hill, Maxwell Liuzzi, Piper McAdoo, Jacob Meyers, Remington Mietlowski, Cerenity Street, Blake Barr, William Burzynski, Lilian Bradley, Leticia Cabrera, Daniella Carnes, Ellenora Clark, Riley Clark, Teagan Costello, Wesley Duchow, James Garcia, Peyton Green, Leeora Hess, Cole



Jackson, Jordyn Jones, Liam Lanighan, Easton Lewis, Zoe Maier, Owen Phillips, Rose Poyfair, Cody Schwab, Gabriella Smaczniak, Cimari Street, Elyza Wedekind, Evelyn Wittcop, Annabelle Worrells, Addison Wright

- Candy Kids: Isabella Marvin, Ayla Riches, Ariane Watts, Lydia Atwater, Makenzie Hill, Piper McAdoo, Cerenity Street, Lilian Bradley, Leticia Cabrera, Daniella Carnes, Ellenora Clark, Riley Clark, Teagan Costello, Leeora Hess, Zoe Maier, Rose Poyfair, Gabriella Smaczniak, Cimari Street, Elyza Wedekind, Evelyn Wittcop, Annabelle Worrells, Addison Wright
- Squirrels: Lilian Bradley, James Garcia, Leeora Hess, Cole Jackson, Rose Poyfair
- Stage Crew: Aidan Brandel, Aiden Moen, Marshal Demonico, Rory Harvey, Greyson Heitzenrater, Atticus Janese, Hudson Prynn, Landon Wakefield, Orion Harvey

For more *Willy Wonka Kids!* and *Anastasia* pictures and information, please visit the Barker website. See page 10 of the December issue of *The Banner* for the cast and crew of *Anastasia*.



(Clockwise from upper right): *Willy Wonka* cast in the Fizzy Lifting Room. *Anastasia* images - Adler Detschner, Jocelyn Schmitt, Connor Dwyer. Ava Kelemen, Melodi Murphy, Charlie Dwyer, Olivia Voss, Jillian Fisk.



## MYSTERY READERS VISIT FIRST GRADERS

From February 28<sup>th</sup> - March 28<sup>th</sup>, first grade students were visited by a mystery reader each day. Over the span of 21 school days, the students had 24 different guests read a story, chosen by the mystery reader. Students in Mrs. Gilbert's and Mrs. Nobles' class heard the following stories by the list of guests:

- Mr. Carter: *Norman Didn't Do It! (Yes, He Did)*
- Mrs. Cottle: *Dozens of Dachshunds*
- Mrs. Zablocki: *Sam and Dave Dig a Hole*
- Mrs. Love: *Hop on Pop*
- Mr. DerSarkissian: *Giraffe and a Half*
- Mrs. Dissek: *The Cranky Book and Little Green Donkey*
- Mrs. Riley: *Greenlight*
- Dr. Reimer: *Henry Explores the Jungle*
- Mrs. Bowman: *Amelia Bedelia, Bookworm*
- Mrs. DeMarco: *A Bad Case of Stripes*
- Mrs. Monaco: *Clever Tom and the Leprechaun*
- Mr. Burke: *The Eleventh Hour*
- Mr. Cornwell: *Grumpy Monkey*
- Mrs. Finitz: *I have Ants in my Pants*
- Mrs. Fuerch: *Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog*
- Mrs. Bush: *Peanut Butter and Cupcake*
- Mrs. Grabowski (Barker Public Library): *Tony's Hard Work Day*
- Mrs. Nestoros: *An Egg is Quiet*
- Officer Parente: *Where the Wild Things Are*
- Mrs. Montesanti: *Doggone Dogs!*
- Mrs. Bannister: *Hello Goodbye and a Very Little Lie*
- Mrs. Luckman: *The Snail and the Whale*
- Mrs. Watry: *Macca the Alpaca*
- Mrs. Thibault: *The Big Orange Splot*



(Top to bottom): **Mrs. Fuerch** and **Mrs. Montesanti** visited first grade students as mystery readers.

## READ ACROSS AMERICA

To celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday and acknowledge Read Across America, Mrs. Cottle and Mrs. DeMarco (pictured at right with students) organized a week of dress up days from Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>-Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. During the week there was also a "Dear" time, which was a random morning or afternoon time, each day, where all students were notified over the PA that it was time to "drop everything and read." Teachers participated with students and determined how long the dear time would last for their individual classroom. Mrs. Love scheduled times with teachers to read-aloud to the students in their classrooms. A photo booth was available to stop in and have pictures taken for those interested.



Dress up days for the week included: Cat Day (dress like Cat in the Hat or wear red and black), Hat Day (wear your favorite hat), Wacky Wednesday (wear as many different colors and patterns as possible), Seuss Character Day (dress as your favorite Dr. Seuss character).

Mrs. Cottle and Mrs. DeMarco were very thankful and appreciative for all the time and effort at school and home that helped to promote literacy and encourage a love of reading among the Pratt Elementary students.

## ECLUB SPRING BOUQUET SALE

EClub members helped Niagara Hospice with their Annual Spring Bouquet Sale and appreciated the support of everyone that purchased a bouquet or donated a bouquet to a current Niagara Hospice patient or a Niagara County veteran. 49 bouquets were purchased helping EClub to raise \$660 for an organization that truly makes a positive difference in our local community by caring for end of life patients and their families.

EClub member Brooke Dunkelberger said, "We sold flowers to raise money for Niagara Hospice. Giving to others always makes you feel good!" "I helped sell flowers for Niagara Hospice because I wanted to help others and I felt happy knowing I helped others," shared Lauren Zglinicki. Jillian Fisk shared, "I helped because giving back to the community makes me happy. This fundraiser was so much fun and I'm so glad to help!"



(L-R): Lauren Zglinicki, Jillian Fisk, Brooke Dunkelberger, and Eva Kelsey help with flower delivery.

## HIGH SCHOOL P.E. TOURNAMENTS

Over the past few months, cornhole, pickleball, and badminton tournaments were run in the high school physical education classes. The team of Jackson Prynne and Noah Sandolfini and the team of Joel Harris and Charles LaGreca were slated to meet in the cornhole finals, but due to BOCES scheduling conflicts and student availability, the tournament was unable to be completed.

Isaac Monaco defeated Daniel Goodwin to win the singles championship of the pickleball tournament. Isaac Monaco and Charles LaGreca reached the finals of the doubles tournament where Lucas DerSarkissian filled in for Charles LaGreca due to a scheduling conflict. Isaac Monaco and Lucas DerSarkissian defeated Carter DerSarkissian and Peyton Wagner to win the doubles bracket.

Duke Redsteer and Zackary Santarsiero defeated Luis Castro and Peyton Wagner in the finals of the badminton doubles tournament. Donovan Hefferon advanced to the finals of the tournament and awaited the winner between Isaac Monaco and Andreas Nestoros. At press time the singles tournament was not complete.

Miss Clark and Mr. Bruning would like to extend a thank you to all who participated and those who came to watch. Good luck to all competitors in the upcoming volleyball tournament.



(Clockwise from upper right and L-R): Zackary Santarsiero and Duke Redsteer, Noah Sandolfini and Jackson Prynne, Isaac Monaco and Daniel Goodwin.



## THE SPORTS PAGE

During the winter season, 14 Athletes of the Week were recognized and so far this spring we have acknowledged 4 more. 3 winter sport teams received New York State Public High School Athletic Association Scholar-Athlete status. 2 boys basketball players participated in the Niagara-Orleans League/Genesee Region Exceptional Senior game and 1 received N-O League 1<sup>st</sup> Team honors. The 2 Niagara PAL Prep Athletes were announced and 1 track & field athlete has established a new record. Follow Barker Bulldogs Athletics on X (@BarkerBulldogs) and visit the Barker Athletics channel on our website to view more athletics information including Sports Stories, archives, pictures, schedules and more: [www.barkercsd.net/athletics](http://www.barkercsd.net/athletics)



### Barker Track & Field Record Breaker:

- Keira Dalton, Discus, 111' 9" on 4/23/24 vs. Albion

### Athletes of the Week, Spring Season:

- Jordyn Kinne, Track & Field (4/15/24)
- Jordan Leising, Track & Field (4/15/24)
- Peyton Bradley, Softball (4/8/24)
- Wyatt Payne, Track & Field (4/8/24)



### Athletes of the Week, Winter Season:

- Sophia Pavlock, Competitive Cheer (2/10/24)
- Donovan Hefferon, Basketball (2/10/24)
- Chloe Duchow, Competitive Cheer (1/27/24)
- Luis Castro, Basketball (1/27/24)
- Cheyann Walker, Swimming (1/13/24)
- Logan Murrell, Basketball (1/13/24)
- Lillia Peace, Basketball (12/30/23)
- Owen Harris, Basketball (12/30/23)
- Riley Klopfer, Swimming (12/9/23)
- Michael Kalynycz, Basketball (12/9/23)



### Niagara-Orleans League 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-League recognition:

- Luis Castro, Basketball

### N-O/G-R Exceptional Senior Game:

- Luis Castro
- Aidan Mescall

### NYSPHSAA Winter Scholar-Athlete Teams:

- Boys Basketball
- Girls Basketball
- Competitive Cheer (w/ Roy-Hart)

### Niagara PAL Prep Athlete Awards:

- Emma Evans
- Aidan Mescall



Luis Castro



Emma Evans



Aidan Mescall



## IMAGES FROM AROUND CAMPUS



(Clockwise from upper right): Niagara County Farm Bureau President **Kevin Bittner** read the book, *The Barn at Night* to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. Ground breaking of the new athletic complex. Students visited the PTO Scholastic Book Fair. World champion athlete and youth motivational speaker **Chris Poulos** answers questions from kindergarten students at the anti-bullying assembly. **Chris Poulos** jumps his bike over **Mr. Norris, Mrs. Costello, and Miss Tabone**. Aerial view of the capital project construction.



## ANNUAL BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

12:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Herbert F. Ludwig Fine Arts Hall

The ballot will contain four (4) propositions which you may vote on:

### PROPOSITION NO. 1 – Adopt 2024-2025 Budget

Shall the Barker Central School District Board of Education, Niagara County, New York be authorized to spend the sum of \$18,895,718 in the total amount set forth in the proposed Budget during the 2024-2025 school year and to levy the necessary tax.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No



### PROPOSITION NO. 2 – Election of Board Members – Vote for Three

To elect three (3) members of the Board for a 3-year term commencing July 1, 2024 and expiring on June 30, 2027, to succeed Randall B. Atwater, Candice Gancasz, and Virginia Voss whose terms expire on June 30, 2024.

- ☐ Stephanie M. Williams  
☐ Jessica Stewart-Rohring  
☐ Candice Gancasz  
☐ Virginia Voss  
☐ Randall B. Atwater  
☐ Write In \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Write In \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Write In \_\_\_\_\_



### PROPOSITION NO. 3 – Adopt Library Budget

To adopt 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 and increase the Library budget from \$82,806.00 to \$90,259.00. This is an increase of \$7,453.00.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No





## PROPOSITION NO. 4 – Library Trustee Election

To elect one (1) Trustee to the Barker Public Library Board for a 5-year term commencing July 1, 2024 and expiring June 30, 2029 to succeed Jessica Monaco.

- ☐ Vernetta R. Kenyon
- ☐ Leslie Wolbert
- ☐ Susan Klute
- ☐ 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 21, 2024; 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.



## TRI-COMPONENT BUDGET INFORMATION

For information about the budget please visit the Barker website at:  
[www.barkerbsd.net/business](http://www.barkerbsd.net/business)

The Tri-Component contains the line by line breakout of the budget as well as the property tax report card and other information and can be found at:  
[www.barkerbsd.net/tri-componentbudget](http://www.barkerbsd.net/tri-componentbudget)







## PROPOSED 2024-2025 BARKER SCHOOL BUDGET

The 2024-2025 proposed budget reflects a continuation of current program and opportunities for students in the current 2023-2024 budget. The majority of the increased expenses relate to contractual obligations. The social/emotional health teams, student support teaching positions, programs and extra-curricular activities have been maintained for the next year while being supplemented by stimulus dollars as per Education Law.

BARKER BUDGET EXPENDITURE SUMMARY 2024-2025				
EXPENDITURES	2024-2025	2023-2024	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
GENERAL SUPPORT	\$ 2,493,298	\$ 2,495,002	\$ (1,704)	-0.07%
INSTRUCTION	\$ 10,651,573	\$ 10,161,102	\$ 490,471	4.83%
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION	\$ 1,440,175	\$ 1,414,975	\$ 25,200	1.78%
COMMUNITY SERVICE	\$ 33,600	\$ 33,600	\$ -	0.00%
UNDISTRIBUTED *	\$ 4,277,072	\$ 4,090,973	\$ 186,099	4.55%
TOTAL	\$ 18,895,718	\$ 18,195,652	\$ 700,066	3.85%

\*Includes the Capital Outlay Project of \$100,000 consisting of renovations to the Jr.-Sr H.S. Auditorium including stage rigging, lights, and sound improvements.

For additional information, see also: Tri-Component Budget at: [www.barkerbsd.net/tri-componentbudget](http://www.barkerbsd.net/tri-componentbudget)

## DETAILED EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES

**General Support consists of:** Board of Education, Central Administration, Finance, Staff, Certain BOCES expenses, and Special Items. This also includes Maintenance and Operation of Plant, (including all maintenance and grounds salaries, supplies and materials, and utilities), Central Printing/Mailing, and Central Data Processing.

**Instruction consists of:** Instructional Administration and Improvement (principal's salary and supplies, curriculum development, research and planning, and professional development for all professional staff), Teaching Regular School (all regular school teaching salaries, supplies and materials, equipment, textbooks, and BOCES services for regular students, including Occupational Education), School Library and Audiovisual, Technology Services, Attendance, Guidance, Health Services, Psychological Services, Extra-classroom Activities, Athletics, and Special Education (special education teacher salaries, supplies and 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 costs.

**Community Services consists of:** Summer Programming and Adult Education.

**Undistributed consists of:** Employer contributions to the employees' and the teachers' retirement systems, social security, workers' compensation premiums, unemployment insurance, health insurance, and terminal leave payments. It also includes payments of principal and interest on school bond payments and the capital outlay project.



# SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET NOTICE

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2023-2024 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2024-2025 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2024-2025 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$18,195,652	\$18,895,718	\$18,464,848
Increase/Decrease for the 2024-2025 School Year		\$ 700,066	\$ 269,196
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.85 %	1.46%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.12 %	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 5,017,125	\$ 5,157,400	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$ 82,806	\$ 90,258	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$ 0	\$ 0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$ 0	\$ 0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$ 5,099,931	\$ 5,247,658	\$ 5,107,383
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 0	\$ 1,292	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 5,055,766	\$ 5,156,108	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$ 5,017,125	\$ 5,156,108	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$ 38,641	\$ 0	
Administrative Component	\$ 1,726,882	\$ 1,964,623	\$ 1,751,203
Program Component	\$ 14,775,890	\$ 15,378,555	\$ 15,321,105
Capital Component	\$ 1,692,880	\$ 1,552,540	\$ 1,392,540
<p>* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2024-2025 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.</p> <p>The Capital Outlay project as well as equipment classified as contingent has been eliminated. Reductions made in material and supplies as well as conference attendance and association dues.</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)	Description		Amount
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$

\*NOTE TO SCHOOL DISTRICT BUSINESS OFFICIALS: Please submit an electronic version (Word or PDF) of this completed form to: [ems-cmgt@nysed.gov](mailto:ems-cmgt@nysed.gov)

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2024-2025 School Year

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

\$ 419

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-2025 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 21, 2024, between the hours of 12:00 pm and 8:00pm, 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.

## MEET THE BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES



### **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 retired from this career in 2021. 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.



### **Candice Gancasz**

Candice Gancasz has lived in the Barker area for over 40 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 35 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 9 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.



### **Jessica Stewart-Rohring**

Hello! I am currently running for a seat on the Barker Board of Education. A little insight about myself and why I am running. I have been a Barker resident for the past eight years, and growing up in a small town (Wilson, Class of 2006), my husband, Jesse, and I wanted to give our children the same upbringing.

In addition to being a Wilson graduate, I have two degrees in Music and Digital Media from SUNY Niagara and Buffalo State College. I have been a private music instructor for the past six years at Cadence Music, and love working with children of all ages.

With two small boys, my oldest attending Pratt Elementary, my goal for school board is to focus on academics so each child that graduates from BCS can feel prepared and empowered for life outside of school, either in the workforce, college, military or entrepreneurship. This can be achieved through stable, undisturbed

classroom settings, support for student services, as well as transparency of policies and curriculum between students, parents and the community. Our children are the future!"



### Virginia Voss

My name is Virginia Voss and I am running for a third term on the Barker School Board. I am an Operations Manager at Tops in Lockport where I have worked for over 35 years. Twenty-five 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. I am proud to say all four children graduated from Barker! 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.



### Stephanie Williams

My name is Stephanie M. Williams and I am running for the Barker Central School Board of Education. My husband and I have lived in Barker for over 10 years and love the small-town community. Being a Newfane graduate I know how much heart and pride is in a small town. I am currently the bookkeeper for our family-owned business, Williams Plumbing Inc.

Living in the current economy, and being a business owner, I understand the need for a responsible budget. As a taxpayer, and community member I want to help allocate funds correctly and most beneficially.

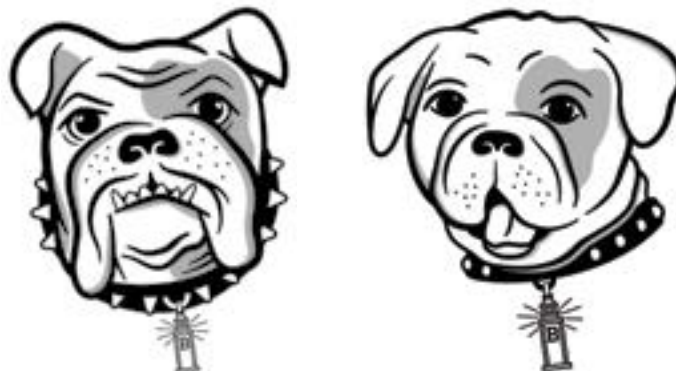
We have three sons, our youngest two attend Pratt Elementary in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and PreK. As a parent of young children in the District and a committed community member, I would make a great addition to the school board. The school board is the voice of the community with the children's education as their core mission statement.



I am invested in the successful future of the District! I am dedicated to being a voice for every child.

If elected, I will bring focus on student support services, and parental input on all policies. I want every Barker School District resident to feel supported by their school board members.

EDUCATE! ADVOCATE! INSPIRE!



## FROM THE SHELVES OF THE BARKER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Hello from the Barker Public Library!

If you haven't heard, our brand new, big, wonderful Barker Public Library is almost open and ready for business! It has been a five year struggle to continue to provide services to all of you from our small space on Church Street (which we have been grateful for!) and to raise enough funds to make this new build happen. The Village of Barker and the Barker Public Library came to an agreement to make this dream become a reality. Through the generous donations of great people, the hard work of our director, the support of our Nioga

Library System and our local legislators, we were fortunate enough to raise \$728,000 to provide almost half of the funds necessary to complete the project. In addition, together we were able to secure a joint NYS grant for \$400,000. We are so very excited to add to our current services and programming as we grow in our new facility.

In 2014 you voted to allow us to become a School District Library and to be funded by your tax dollars. That year we received \$75,000 from you to run our library. Our current tax levy, 10 years later, is \$82,806. The current budget is about \$98,000. We use small grants, donations and a small amount of savings to balance. The library board has worked very hard to keep spending down. Increasing costs for materials, programs, services, utilities and minimum wage has caused us to request an increase.

So this year we are asking you to support our annual budget with an increase of 9% which will bring us \$90,259. The average taxpayer, \$100,000 in assessed value, will see an increase of \$3.00 for the Barker Library tax!

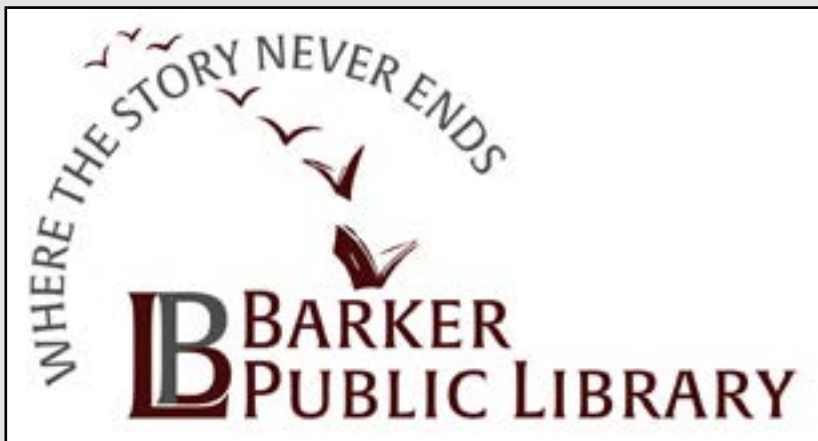
Please stop in to see us! We don't just have books! The library has DVDs, periodicals, audio books and tablets. We have toddler story hour, book club and summer reading program. Our services are multiplied by being part of the Nioga system; Interlibrary loan, as well as Hoopla and Libby that provide free downloads of ebooks, music and video to your devices! There are computer stations for your use and a child friendly station as well.

Looking forward, we want to provide so much more in the way of programs and events for our community. We can do this with your support. A new Friends of the Library group has formed and they would love to have you join. Through these joint efforts, we feel our library can become a vibrant community center.

Thank you for your patience and support! Come check us out!

Director: Lisa Thompson  
President: Kathie Smith

Vice President: Cynthia Harris  
Secretary: Jessica Monaco  
Trustee: Brian Carmer  
Trustee: Ashley Grabowski



## EXCITING COMMUNITY EDUCATION REGISTRATION NEWS!



Community Ed is working towards moving to an online platform for its registration and payment processing starting with the Fall semester!

As so many classes are social occasions, the new platform has a friends and family registration component available which will enable one person to easily register their family members and circle of friends with just a click to participate in a class together. Even better, you are able to register for as many classes as your or they'd like at the same time. Registration can be done on a

computer or, if you are on the go, your phone.

As security is of highest concern, the platform provides the technical details like security certificates, encryption, and PCI compliance. Credit card information entered is in a completely PCI compliant manner and encrypted such that even the platform company cannot see the full credit card number. Registrants who choose to store their credit card for re-use are protected by Stripe's on-disk AES-256 encryption. Stripe is a Level 1 PCI DSS Compliant service provider.

As up to date class information is important, the instructors and the Community Ed director will be able to communicate with the participants through email in a timely manner. Discounts, credits, refunds, class update information will all be provided through the platform quick and easy. Stay tuned for more details!



(L-R): Addison Szafranski - Painting, *Magical Dreams*. Julia Cimato, Painting, *Under the Sea*



BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
1628 QUAKER ROAD  
BARKER, NY 14012

NON PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 3  
MIDDLEPORT NY

POSTAL CUSTOMER  
BARKER, NY 14012

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

**Board of Education**

Randall B. Atwater, President  
John E. Sweeney Jr., Vice President  
Deanna Carnes  
Candice Gancasz  
Emily Gow  
Jennifer Harris  
Virginia Voss

**Superintendent of Schools**

Jacob L. Reimer

**Principal**

Micaela Love

**Coordinator of Curriculum &  
Professional Learning/Assistant**

**Principal**

Christian Cornwell

**Directory of Instructional  
Services/Assistant Principal**

Mark Learo

**Business Administrator**

Michael Carter

**District Clerk**

Mary Eadie

**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.



(Above): **Makayla King** - Altered Book, *The Phoenix Rising Sun*. See more student artwork throughout the issue. Visit the Barker website to view dates and locations for all the upcoming art shows including Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup> during the budget vote.