

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2020

Richfield Springs Central School District

C O M M U N I T Y N E W S L E T T E R

Fall & Winter Edition

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Superintendent's Message



These are certainly challenging times in so many ways. Through it all, we continue to strive to move forward, seeing the light at the end of the tunnel of this global pandemic. We have done our best to make this a great school year, in spite of these challenges.

Richfield Springs schools has had several advantages that have helped us to try to meet the educational and social needs of all of our students, while keeping everyone as safe as possible. We were able to keep the elementary and middle school grades on a normal, daily, in-person schedule for the first 14 weeks of the school year. This was accomplished at the elementary level by splitting the grade levels into three class sections, rather than the normal two and using all available space in the building to reduce class size and physically distance everyone. The high school has been in a hybrid schedule, with every other day, in-person instruction, which was able to be continued for the first 13 weeks of the school year. The key to this success was again, splitting the classes in half in order to safely physically distance.

As a District, the buy-in and following of protocols, practices and procedures is how we were able to stay in-person for so long, before COVID cases amongst us forced us to go to a fully virtual schedule in the middle of December for a month. The positivity rate in the greater Mohawk Valley community played a role in this decision too. We are hopeful to re-

turn to our in-person schedule and finish out the school year in the building.

When forced to move to fully virtual instruction, few districts were ready to successfully engage their students the way that Richfield Springs was and is. Our faculty and staff have worked tirelessly to improve online instruction and interactions with our students. That, combined with our 1:1 device program and the WIFI hotspot program for those without Internet service at home has allowed us to reach all students, as has our educators' ability to be flexible and teach students by being creative with scheduling.

One thing that has become glaringly clear over the last year is the incredible importance that the school plays in, not just the academic success, but the well-being of our students in all aspects of their lives. We would also like to say thank you to all of the families that have adjusted their schedules and partnered with the school in the teaching of our children. It has been a true community partnership for so many.

Together in Success,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "T. Piatti". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Thomas A. Piatti
Superintendent of Schools

A Message from the Board of Education

The Board continues to extend best wishes to the RSCS District family during these unprecedented times. We hope each of you, your families and friends are staying safe and healthy as we all work through the continued effects of the COVID pandemic.

Across the country, families with school-aged children have done an exceptional job in making sure learning continues even as modifications to the experience need to be made – sometimes on a daily basis. The same is true at RSCS. The Board has maintained throughout that RSCS needs a strong plan and process in place to ensure an outstanding educational experience for our students. The devotion and commitment of our administrators, faculty and staff does not go unnoticed. We cannot thank them enough for all they have done and continue to do on behalf of our District.

To our students, don't let COVID fatigue get you down. Remain diligent, continue to take pride in your work and face these challenges head on. You have an opportunity to embrace the educational process like never before. When you need it, help is always there – just ask.

The Board wants to thank Julie Galvalo for her dedication as a member of the team over the past two years. Her thoughtful approach will be missed – but we all wish her well in Connecticut with

her family. We welcome Nancy Duevel as our newest trustee, and thank her for her pledge to the families of our District. We value Nancy's input and look forward to working with her.

We also want to send our sincere condolences to former state Assemblyman William "Bill" Magee's family. Bill Magee was a champion of education, especially in the rural districts that he served. Often he made himself available to us and listened to our needs. Mr. Magee along with former state Senator Jim Seward were instrumental in securing funding for the RSCS School Based Health Center. Over the past several years, when funding to education remained tight, Bill would work with the legislature to help our District. He will be missed.

We have learned a lot about ourselves during these times. The in-class educational experience, clubs, musical events and sports will be back. Please, pay attention to your health and your family's health – because that's what matters. In time, history will show that, despite these difficulties, we got through this together.

Respectfully,

Scot Mondore
*President, Richfield Springs Board of
Education*

Welcome Back RSCS Students and Staff!

Many parents and students may have felt anxious returning to in-person school on September 8th, but it was the hope of one teacher that some chalk messages welcoming everyone back would put a smile on their faces and help ease their worry.



Following CDC Recommendations, RSCS invested in infrared thermometers, face shields, surgical masks and gloves so that staff could safely perform on-site health screenings.



Here are second grade teachers Mrs. Barnhart and Mrs. Burdick making sure their students are healthy enough to be in the classroom. Notice students are wearing their masks and are patiently socially distancing while they wait their turn to greet their teacher.

Chris Abbruzze, Manager, and the rest of the dedicated cafeteria staff bag up individual breakfasts every morning to deliver to our elementary students. This helps keep too many students from gathering in line at morning arrival.



Here is one of our second graders enjoying his breakfast packed with care.



Girl Scout Troop 60101 “Choose Kind” and Volunteer to Help Animals in Need

Richfield Springs 6th grade students, Isabelle Weiss, Amber Connolly, Natalie Dumond, Madison O'Connor and Lilly Blackledge are the recipients of the Girl Scout Bronze Award. This award is the highest honor a Girl Scout Junior can earn. In order to qualify

for this honor the girls had to spend a minimum of 20 hours on a sustainable project that would make an impact on their community.

The girls created a “Take Action” project and volunteered their time at the local

SPCA helping care for the animals, hosting a supply drive and making homemade dog treats they delivered to the dog shelter. Small acts of kindness such as these take big hearts, and make all the difference.

If Your Child is Sick....

When your child is out sick, please contact the guidance office by 9:00 a.m. for homework to be gathered. Understand that sometimes notes for all classes might not be available that same day. If a child misses class, notes that were on the board will have to be reproduced. That will take some time to do

because of our copying policy. If your child is absent, we make every effort to have all homework collected. However, remind your child to ask the teacher what else needs to be done to make up all that's missed. Remember that being in school as much as possible is the best way to get it all.

**To Report an
Absence Call:
315-858-0610 x1010**

**For Health
Questions Call:
315-858-0610 x1081**

Welcome New Staff



Mr. Lee Supensky
Interim Middle and High
School Principal



Ms. Kaitlyn Barlow
Middle and High School
Math



Ms. Suzanne Phillips
Long-term substitute
French



Mr. Brian Lynch
Bus Driver and Head Bus
Mechanic

New Behavioral Health Resource Center Program Director

My name is Kelly Hromada-Johnson, LCSW-R, Program Director and Clinical Supervisor of the Behavioral Health Resource Center (BHRC). Rehabilitation Support Services (RSS) is very excited to become a part of the System of Care!

The agency was founded in 1979 and now serves over 13 counties in upstate New York, serving more than 3,000 individuals each year and providing community-based mental health and substance abuse services. Each BHRC Social Worker will be working with two Otsego County Schools to identify youth and families with a possible need for mental health and other community services. BHRC Social Workers will team up with each school's support staff and administration.

RSCS, myself, and the BHRC Social Workers look forward to this 2020/2021 school year.

Richfield Springs CSD Welcomes New Board of Education Member

Ms. Duevel grew up in the area and graduated from Owen D. Young Central School. From there, she earned degrees in engineering from Clarkson University and Southern Methodist University.



After a long career as a structural engineer, Ms. Duevel returned to this area where she now makes her home in Richfield Springs. Please join us in welcoming Ms. Duevel to the board of education!



CSE Survey

Parents of Students Who Are Receiving Special Education Services: This year the CSE office will be working with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to collect information on how we help you and other

parents of students with disabilities to be involved in their children's education. Your answers to the survey are very important to us. They will help us identify how well we work with parents in order to improve services and results for all our students with disabilities. No one from our school district will see how you

answered the questions. An independent research company will compile the results of the surveys from all our parents and the results will be available to you in a public report issued by NYSED for our school district. We will be contacting you with more information at a future date. Thank you!

Fall Golf Experience



Photo includes (l-r): Jake Patterson, Dylan Dyn, Damon Boss, Anna Hawkes, Brady Young, Austin Bowman, Cole Bobnick (missing is Damon Thomson)

When the decision was officially made to push fall sports to a March 1st start date, it left a group of athletes wondering what to do with their newfound “free time”. Enter the game of golf. This summer a group of (mostly) senior boys spent some of their time working on their golf game at the local Meadow Links Golf Course. For most, it was their first time experiencing the game and they fell in love with it.

Without a fall soccer season, Senior Dylan Dyn approached P.E. instructor and coach, TJ Hoose, and proposed the idea of playing some fall golf through the school. After Hoose had conversations with Athletic Coordinator Terry Havens, High School Principal Lee Supensky and Superintendent Tom Piatti, the idea of a golf experience for young men and ladies in grades 11 through 12 came together. Dylan contacted the golf course, negotiated a price and the package for the participants. Within days they were off and running, well, er, putting and driving.

Supervised by volunteer adults Mr. Hoose and long time RSCS teacher Steve Hawkes, the gang gets together every Monday and Friday. The six or so regulars start out warming up on the range and working on their driving skills (Fifth grade teacher and former golf instructor Rick Mucurio has helped with this). Then they play nine holes at the beautiful executive length course.

The adults and the golf group would like to thank the administration for its support and Meadow Links Golf Course for their cooperation and for making this new endeavor possible.



Trap & Skeet Club

Last winter RSCS student Cole Bobnick, an outdoor enthusiast, was at a youth shoot in Milford. It was there that he found out about their Clay Target League and that schools like GMU and Stockbridge Valley also participated in such a thing. With his connections at the Richfield Sportsmen's Club, Cole secured a coach and then spoke with officials in the school district, including the high school principal, the Athletic Coordinator and Superintendent, Tom Piatti. The Board of Education approved the venture for the spring season, but then COVID happened and the group was unable to start as planned.



L-R front: Ed Bello, Riley Blackledge, Nathan Teachout, Jesse Bowman, Joey Pino-Luz, Carson Seamon. L-R back: Sportsmen's Club member/ass't David Palmer, Jake Patterson, Austin Bowman, Dylan Dyn, Laken Dyn, Anna Hawokes, Cole Bobnick and Sportsmen's Club member/ass't Gary Southard. Absent: Maddie Martin, Christian Stegan, Thomas and Ethan O'Connor



Fast forward to Fall 2020 and you have a group of fifteen young men and women who have something to look forward to after quarantining for more than six months. Participants meet at the local Sportsmen's Club every Wednesday for about two and a half hours. Led in part by Coach and RSCS alum Ed Bello, the Sportsmen's Club also has volunteers that support the youth by keeping score, refilling the clay target thrower, sending the targets out and giving some much appreciated encouragement.

There is no fee for the participants at this time as they have the support of the Sportsmen's Club and other private sponsors. The group keeps their masks on and remains socially distant. Those with questions or interested in signing up for the spring season may contact Lisa Bobnick at 315-868-4156 or Ed Bello at 315-868-9226.



These photos were taken at a September practice at Richfield's Sportsmen's Club. Sponsors are helping make this effort a possibility for our students. RSCS alum Ed Bello is the coach.



RSCS INDIANS

RSCS Fall Baseball

Fall baseball. The major leagues play then, but we don't usually see it in our area. This fall, however, Head Coach Jeff Sarafin led his baseball team through practices and Saturday double headers in the months of September and October. The Indians played as part of the U-19 American Legion league. Originally, the boys were supposed to play in the summer (the girls played in summer), but COVID restrictions made finding access to ball fields harder than anticipated, thus the delay in play.

Most of the games were played locally with insurance and umpire fees being paid for through Richfield Youth Sports and a player's fee. Players from Milford and one from Sherburne also participated on the team. Players wore masks in the dugout and together in huddles. Mom volunteers enforced safety protocol and were in charge of disinfecting the bats, helmets, balls, et cetera in between each turn at bat and in between innings.

The young athletes cooperated with all regulations and were just happy to play on a team with each other again. With Section 4 soccer play being postponed to March, "Fall Ball" also allowed players to keep busy, stay in shape and practice for the spring season.



RSCS raises over \$1000 for the American Cancer Society

It was a collaborative community and district effort that yielded more than we could have ever hoped for. Our families and friends donated, our students and teachers participated, and our hearts were humbled through the entire process.

Our pink pumpkins, pink dress up days, pie a teacher in the face, and pink ribbon fundraisers, together, raised \$1040! All proceeds went directly to the American Cancer Society. THANK YOU to ALL for your contributions. We can't wait to do it again next year!



RENY Grant Award Recipient, Ms. Ambrose

The following transcript is from a speech given at a recent award recipient ceremony at the Richfield Springs.

“Good morning, to begin, I am Ray Pitcher, the President of the Central Zone of Retired Educators of New York, formally New York State Retired Teachers Association. With me today, is retired principal Johnnie Jones and the president of the Oneida-Herkimer Retired Teachers Association. We wish to thank Superintendent Mr. Tom Piatti, and building principal Dr. Rene Wilson for working with us to make this award possible.

We are here to present the Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant. For over sixty-eight years, one of the objectives of The New York State Retired Teachers Association has been working toward the advancement of education in our state and country. In an attempt to help meet that objective, RENY has developed a



\$1,000 grant program to assist active educators in developing and implementing an innovative program or project.

To be eligible for the grant, an educator must be a full-time teacher or administrator in a public-school district in New York State. The full grant may be used for programs or projects for any number of reasons such as improving student

academic achievement, self-esteem, or behavior, or in support of current issues such as teen pregnancy, health concerns, bullying, etc. The winner of the grant was determined by a team of judges who are local members of RENY. Due to the pandemic the award of this grant was postponed until now.

For her project Building Resilience in youth, a school wide approach; we are pleased to present the Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant to Ms. Amy Ambrose.

Have a great school year and stay healthy.” – Mr. Raymond Pitcher, President of the Central Zone of Retired Educators of New York, formally New York State Retired Teachers Association



Wireless Hotspots Available

If you have a student enrolled at the Richfield Springs Central School and are in need of internet access, wireless hotspots are available for loan. To request a hotspot for student use, simply fill out the “RSCS Hotspot Unit Loan Request” form found on our website and our someone from our RSCS IT team will issue one to your student.

The hotspot units are from our vendor partner Kajeet. We have Kajeet hotspots in stock which communicate on both Verizon and AT & T wireless networks. If you are in an area where one network works better than another, please add that into the form. Each hotspot comes with a zippered case, charging cable, charging brick and device logon instructions. Each device has a 30 GB data cap each month

If you would like to request a hotspot for loan and are using a smart device, please open a web browser and navigate to: <https://forms.gle/GYcfwBcBWx-ao5z6J9> and complete the form.

If you would like to request a hotspot for loan and are using a smart device, you can scan the QR code and complete the form.

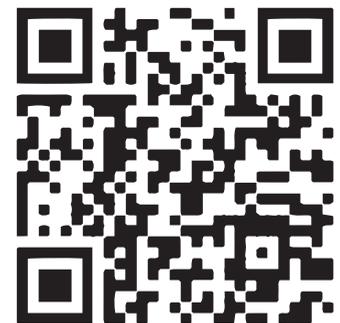
QR Code Tech Tips

On iPhone, simply open the camera and point the camera towards the QR code, wait a few seconds and select open in Safari or other web browser.

If you are using an Android device, simply open the camera and point the camera

towards the QR code, wait a few seconds and select open in Chrome. If nothing happens, download a QR Code App from the Google Play store.

If you are still having trouble, please contact Mr. LaVere at: 315-858-0610 x2344



In Memorium: Mrs. Vanderwerken

September 22, 2020 marked a sad day for the Richfield Springs School. Mrs. Vanderwerken passed away suddenly, and was survived by her husband and daughter Emma. Mrs. Vanderwerken's smile, kindness and grace will never be forgotten. A tree will be planted in her honor this spring.

In her own words from her September 8th, 2020 Facebook post, *"I am so proud of my students. They came to class masked up ready to be there and learn, and visit from a distance too! They did great, followed all instructions to keep everyone safe. I also work with the best school staff on the planet. May this year, my 29th, be a blessing to all."*



"A beautiful Life"

*A beautiful life
that came to an end,
she has died as she lived,
everyone's friend.
In our hearts a memory will
always be kept,
of one we loved,
and will never forget.*

* From her memorial card

In Memorium: Mr. Preston

December 3, 2020 marked another sad day for the Richfield Springs School. Mr. Preston passed away suddenly, after a valiant battle with cancer.

Mr. Preston is survived by his wife, Pam; his children, Steven Preston, Anne Preston and Kimberly Preston along with their families; his siblings, Greg and Penny Preston, Gary Preston and Debbie Comstock, Kevin and Debbie Preston, Brad and Maria Preston, Robert Preston, Jodi and Tim Hill, Michelle and Mark Ashford and Donna Preston; his in-laws, Penny and John VanBuren, Carol and Tim Moore, Kathy and Dale Barrett, Steven LaFountain and Kari James, Susan Burdick and Berri Shirley and Michelle and Doug Call; along with numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews. He also leaves his Godchildren, Tammy Facemire, David VanBuren and Michael VanBuren.



Mr. Preston loved the outdoors. Pictured above is him presenting his salmon catch, while on a fishing charter on Lake Ontario.

"Love Lives On"

*Those we love remain with
us for love itself lives on,
and cherished memories
never fade because a loved
one's gone...
Those we love can never be
more than a thought apart,
For as long as there is
memory, they'll love on in
the heart*

* From his memorial card

A Look Back at the History of RSCS

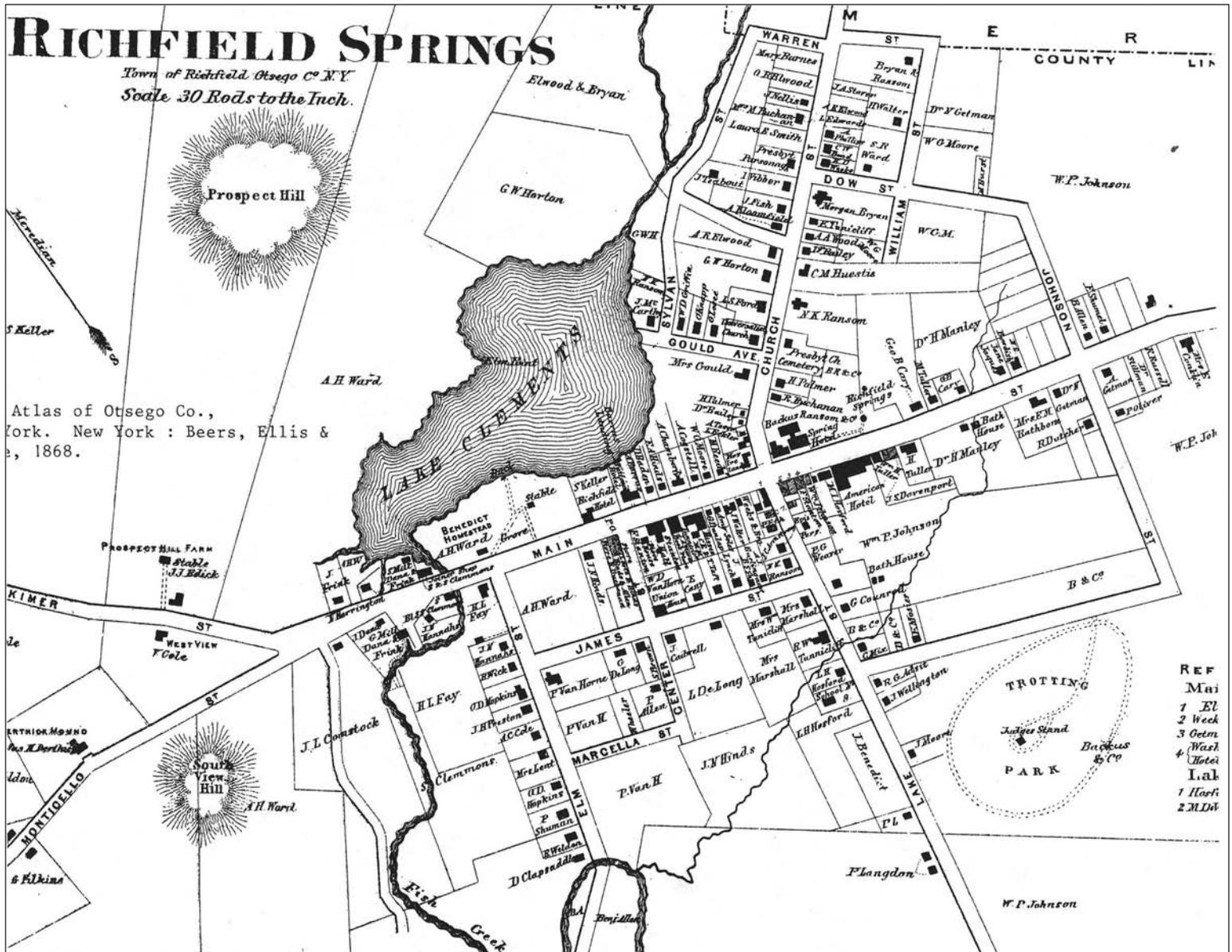
Grounds of the Present School: Lake Clements

William Tunnicliff, youngest son of John Tunnicliff was the first permanent resident of the Village of Richfield Springs. In 1791 he built a saw-mill over Fish Creek, otherwise known as Ocquinois Creek. The dam formed a pond called Lake Clements which covered 22 acres.

The Lake was appreciated by many until 1885. Richfield Springs always prided itself on the sanitary conditions of the Village and Hotels. Fearing the Lake might be a breeding ground for Malaria, the Lake was drained between 1885 and 1887.



William Tunnicliff was a soldier during the revolutionary war. This historical marker is located along Route 20.



Pictured above: Map of Richfield Springs, New York circa 1868, courtesy of Diane Frohne

RSCS First Graduating Class, The Class of 1940



Class of 1940. Front Row: Amelia Hugick, Betty Skinner, Phyllis Neuschel, Carolyn Dobson, Robert House, Dorothy Wing, James Starr, Yvonne LaForest, Elenor Schultz, Julia Johnson, Isobel Dobson; Row 2: Dorothy VanDeWalker, Betty Neuschel, Louise Brown, Lucetta Thompson, Olga Tolopka, Eleanor Cox, Betty Bloomfield, Lelia Bloomfield, Loretta Horan, Elanor Hopkins, Harriet Higbie, Ida Smith; Row 3: Ralph Skinner, Raymond Lundquist, Peter Corck, Donald Slocum, Maurice Lasher, Robert Skinner, Warren Goodale, Russell Druse.

Richfield Springs Central School District Springs CSD

The formation of Central School District No. 1 took place on July 02, 1936.

Nine Districts of the towns of Richfield, Otsego, and Exeter, located in Otsego County, and Columbia and Warren of Herkimer County consolidated to form the Central School District.

Voters selected the site of the Lake Clements to build a new Central School and athletic field.

The school is part of the West Main Street/West James Street Historic District. Built with money from the Public Works Administration, contracts were approved, and ground was broken December 28, 1937 with CE. Ackerly, President of the Board of Education excavating the first shovel of dirt. The approximate cost of the site was \$500,000.

Myron A. Jordan, 1921 High School graduate designed the school. The building with its Limestone entrance portico, multi-light window sash and domed cupola remains one of the finest examples of Public School Architecture of its period in Central New York.

The building was ready for classes in September of 1939. Dr. A. Kendall Get-



Bronner Street Richfield Springs High School, taken from a post card. Courtesy of Diane Frohne

man, a 1906 graduate of High School and Chief of the Architectural Bureau gave the dedicating address. Only fitting since his Grandfather, Andrew K. Goodier, in 1876 launched the Richfield Springs Seminary.

| BUILDING FACTS | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. | Site contains, approximately, 10½ acres. |
| 2. | Cubic feet in building, 983,432.23. |
| 3. | Cost per cubic foot (four main contracts) 39.58c. |
| 4. | Seating capacity of auditorium, 850. |
| 5. | Number of Rooms, 83. |
| 6. | Number of Classroom Units, 27½. |
| 7. | Number of pupils registered, 610. |
| 8. | Seating capacity of Cafeteria, 125. |
| 9. | Seating capacity of Library, 70. |
| 10. | Seating capacity of Building, 685. |
| 11. | Assessed valuation of Unit, \$3,123,294.00. |

The number of pupils registered to attend in 1939 was 610. Student registration constantly increased, reaching 1042 pupils in 1961 which necessitated three additions in 1950, 1955, and a \$132,000 reconstruction in 1961.

Interesting Facts:

The cornerstone of the new school was laid on Thursday afternoon, June 30, 1938 by Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Masons of the State of New York.

There was a ceremony at the old Bronner Street School at 11 o'clock Friday Morning, June 23, 1939 at which time the bell was rung and the flag raised for the last time. Jack Smolens, President of the Graduating Class rang the bell and Bobby Ames raised the flag.

For the curious.....

On occasion, the ghostly image of a woman dressed in an ankle length, brown dress can be spotted in the stairwell leading to the second floor by the Tech. Department.

Recreating Old Traditions

This year freshmen John Burditt and Carson Seamon decided it was time to bring back one of RSCS's oldest traditions - Drive Your Tractor To School Day.

The discussion began one day during DDP class with FFA advisor Mr. Roger Barkman. It quickly became a reality when Burditt and Seamon sought out for approval from Superintendent Mr. Tom Piatti.

Mr. Piatti gladly supported the proposal and the rest is history, or is hoped to be! Burditt and Seamon hope that this tradition will again grow to what it used to be, "back in the old days"!



Class of 2010 Class Reunion



Welcoming the class of 2010 back to RSCS for their 10th year class reunion. COVID caused attendance to be low. But alumni that returned to campus enjoyed their visit in July.

CLASS OF 2010



In Times of Need, Richfield Springs CSD Really Delivers!!

The current pandemic has brought forth some challenges that impact students both in and outside of school. With the educational and nutritional needs of our students in mind, Mr. Grose and his team have been busy delivering both meals and educational materials to our students. Thank you to Ms. Johnson, Mr. Grose, Mr. Abbruzzese, Cafeteria Staff and Transportation Staff for your dedication and consistent efforts!!



Packed with care, transportation staff carefully pack, prep and strategically plan routes in order to meet the needs of our students and community.



Food packs are being carefully loaded into the district vans. The food packs provide our students with nutritious and balanced meals for days.



District vans are packed to the gills! The thoughtfully packed cargo is being dispatched to students and families.

Do you know someone who might need meals or homework delivered?

If so, please call our main district line:

315-858-0610

HALLOWEEN



Pictured above: Mr. Wadnola's 4th grade class.



Pictured above: Mrs. Wust's Kindergarten "Spiders"



Pictured above: Reed and Connor McCartney at Trunk or Treat.



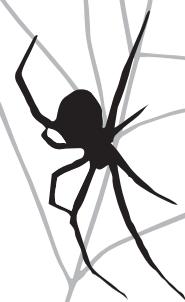
Pictured above: Halloween fun with Mrs. Boss's class



Pictured above: Fun with Equivalent Statements or Fun with Halloween Math



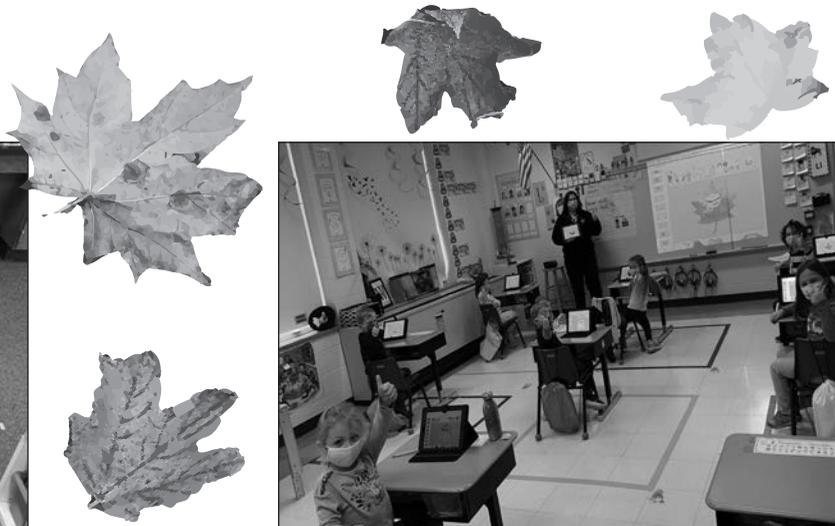
Pictured above : Mrs. Kalkowsky's first grade class used candy corn and pumpkins to practice making and writing equivalent statements. Students made different groups of candies to model groups that are equal. For instance: 2 candy corns plus 3 pumpkins = 4 candy corns and 1 pumpkin. Every one enjoyed the activity and enjoyed taking the candy home.



Thanksgiving



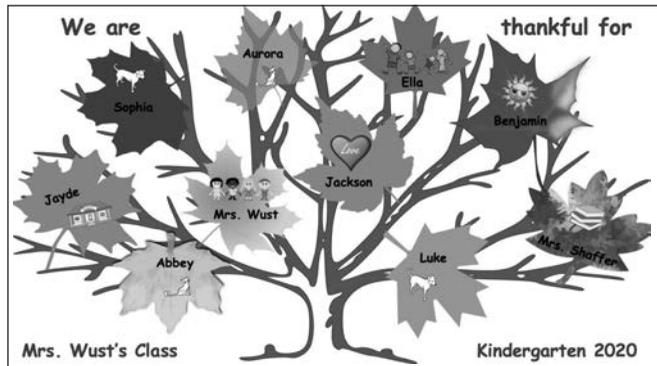
Kinderstar Turkeys are Thankful! They enjoyed wearing their turkey headbands they made.



Mrs. Wust's Kinderstars created a thankful tree with Mrs. Shaffer.



Mrs. Wust's Kinderstars created a thankful tree with Mrs. Shaffer.



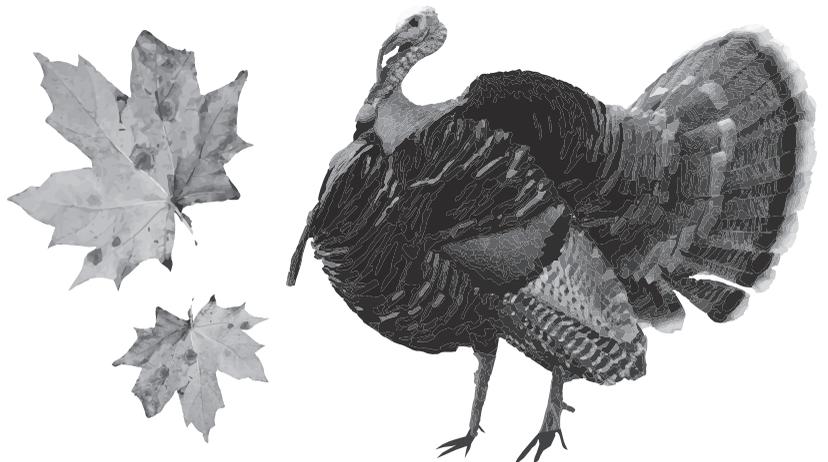
Mrs. Wust's "Thankful Tree"



Mrs. Collis's class gets into the spirit.



Things are a churning in Mrs. Young's class.



Christmas



Mrs. Cade, Mrs. Barracco, Mrs. Wust, Mrs. Bard, Mrs. Mead, Mrs. Simpson and Mrs. Dystra are getting in to the holiday spirit!



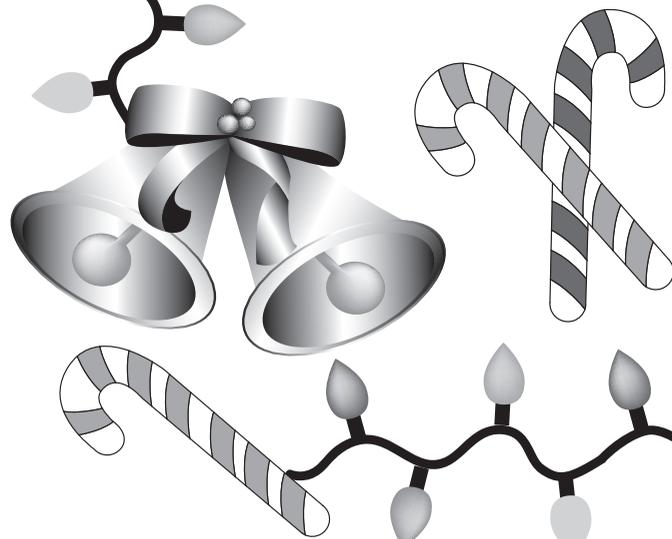
Mrs. Boss's students are getting into the Christmas spirit!



Mrs. Young and students are showing off their crazy Christmas socks.



Mrs. Boss's students are all dressed in their Christmas themed fun!



Picture Gallery



Happy 2021!

