

**Cahill Students Celebrate Flag Day** STORY AND PHOTOS ON PAGE 3

#### **Thank You, Voters!**

The Administration and Board of Education of the Saugerties Central

School District extend their appreciation for

"The Saugerties

has once again

our commitment

—Superintendent Seth Turner

demonstrated

that it shares

to students."

community

the community's

support of the

2015-2016 budget at the polls in May.

"The Saugerties

community

has once again

demonstrated

that it shares our

commitment

to students. We

thank the voters

for their continued

support," said

Superintendent Seth Turner.

In addition to approving the budget, voters elected three new members to the

Board of Education. The board welcomes

Raymond Maclary, James Mooney, and

Robert Thomann, who were sworn in

and began their terms in July.

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## Saugerties School District

**SUMMER 2015** 

## The Game Has Finally Begun"

With diplomas in hand, the encouragement to live their dreams, and a reminder of their "star power," the members of the Saugerties High School Class of 2015 celebrated their big moment on June 27, becoming the school's 119th graduating class.

Wearing caps decorated with everything from helium balloons to symbols of their career dreams, the 236 graduates said good-bye to high school with bright smiles that more than compensated for the gray skies overhead. "The tutorial is over. The game has finally begun," said class secretary Matthew Urrutia, referencing his favorite video game, Mario Brothers, as he addressed his classmates shortly before they received their diplomas. The graduates received advice and encouragement

from seven of their classmates, their principal, Thomas Averill, Superintendent Seth Turner, and Board of Education member Angie Minew.

"Stop and look around you. You will never get this gathering of people together ever again," Turner told the seniors before asking them to shake hands with the person next to them as a sign of peace. He urged them be kind and find the strength within themselves to overcome adversity.

"Be brave enough to push yourself," Turner said, then quoted professional wrestler "Cactus Jack" Mick Foley in reminding the students to "never let anyone define success for you."

> MORE CLASS OF 2015 STORY AND PHOTOS ON PAGES 4 AND 5

#### GRADUATION 2015

#### **Board of Education**

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Angie Minew Charles Schirmer

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**Seth Turner** 

Assistant Superintendent

Lawrence R. Mautone

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# Outstanding Saugerties Junior High School Students Recognized

Saugerties Junior High School students who have excelled in the classroom and demonstrated hard work and character were honored at the school's annual Awards Ceremony on June 3.

Before a packed auditorium of family and friends, more than 150 students received awards for academic excellence, with many students earning honors for maintaining a 97 average or better in more than one academic subject as well as band, chorus, and other courses.

"You've gone above and beyond the norm in class," Principal Tom Averill said, noting the wide array of subjects that students received awards for as evidence of "how many different areas of talent they possess."

A total of 135 students, about one third of both the Grade 7 and Grade 8 classes, maintained a 90 average or better during the first three quarters of the school year.

Saugerties High School senior class president Phoebe Defino addressed the honorees, telling them, "This is a super big deal and you should be very proud."

Recalling her own days in junior high school and her love of language, Defino described her discovery of the word "sagacity" on her Grade 8 vocabu-



Some of the many Grade 8 students honored on June 3 proudly display their certificates.

lary list. She said the word sums up everything that students should strive to be: intelligent, knowledgeable, sensible, and wise.

"Each one of you is sagacious in your own right," Defino said. She urged the students to "find a favorite novel, word, or quote and live it every day. Be practical, optimistic, and ground-moving. Be sagacious. But most important, be you."

In addition to the academic awards, students were also honored for their work ethic, character, and citizenship.

#### **Riccardi Remembers Longtime Crossing Guard with New Tree**

Staff, students, and other members of the Riccardi Elementary School family honored the memory of their beloved longtime crossing guard Ann Ward with the dedication of a tree on the school grounds June 19.

Ann, a lifelong Saugerties resident, passed away on April 29 after a rich and loving life of service and caring for her family and community, especially the children of Riccardi School. For 43 years, from 1971 to 2014, Ann stood on the corner of Delaware and Plenty streets in Glasco, rain or shine, making sure students were safe as they made their way to school.

"It didn't matter if it was raining, snowing, or ten below zero," said Riccardi Principal Sue Osterhoudt. Ann was there and she "started every day with a smile and wave."

In addition to the entire student body and Riccardi staff, members of Ann's family took part in the dedication of the Cherokee Red Dogwood tree near the school's front door.

"My mother so enjoyed this job," said Debbie Landell, one of Ann's four children. Landell described her mother as someone who "just loved life," always put others first, and taught her children to "see the beauty in the little things." She said that, just as Ann watched two generations of Riccardi students grow, they can now watch the tree grow and "remember how



Riccardi students admire the newly planted tree honoring the memory of Ann Ward.

our mom stood tall on the corner, watching over the children of Riccardi."

Landell and her sister Diane Glass presented Osterhoudt with a photograph of their mother in her job as crossing guard. Members of Ann's family were presented with balloons – purple because it was Ann's favorite color and red in honor of her vibrant hair – that they released into the sky at the end of the ceremony.

Osterhoudt said it's "hard not to look for Ann's smile on the corner" every morning, but added that she hopes the tree will serve as a living reminder of Ann and that everyone who looks at it "will see a smile in a leaf and a wave in a branch" and know that "Ann is still here, watching us."



## Saugerties

**Holocaust Survivor Shares Story of Hope and Courage** 



Students wave homemade flags during the parade.

#### **Cahill Celebrates** Flag Day

The grand old flag had its own high-flying I moment of glory on June 12 at Cahill Elementary School as students celebrated Flag

Carrying homemade replicas of Old Glory and wearing patriotic gear ranging from T-shirts to headbands, Kindergarten and Grade 1 students learned more about the flag and helped keep it waving with their own colorful celebration on the school's front lawn. Grade 1 students performed the Pledge of Allegiance in sign language, older students provided fun facts about the flag, and everyone sang the National Anthem.

On hand for the event was an honor guard from American Legion Post 1026 of Woodstock, comprising Vice-Commander Donald Haberski, and members Walter Bollenbach and George Hucker.

Following the activities at the school, the younger students marched through the Village of Saugerties, sharing their celebration with the community. They stopped at local businesses and sang patriotic songs, and residents of nearby homes stepped outside to listen and watch the parade. Residents of Ivy Lodge assisted living facility next door to the school also turned out for the activities on the school lawn.

Haberski said events like Flag Day are important because they give students "an appreciation of what the flag is all about and what our country stands for."

> A patriotic marcher with the perfect hat for the occasion.



the darkest times in history. Holocaust survivor Tibor Spitz became a role model and hero to the entire Mt. Marion sixth grade after visiting with students in June as the culmination of a Holocaust-themed English Language Arts assignment. Teachers Char Fraske and Patricia Pipitone asked their students to read The Devil's Arithmetic, a novel about the Holocaust, and create original poems and artwork in response to what they read. To help the students make a connection with someone who lived through the time period depicted in the book, they invited Mr. Spitz to share his message of hope and courage.

to be, as he puts it, "crazy brave." For inspiration,

Mr. Spitz, his parents, brother, and sister were the only Jewish residents of their small northern Slovakian mountain town of Dolny Kubin - and virtually the only members of their own family – to survive World War II. Although they lived under 270 anti-Jewish laws, the family was temporarily exempt from immediate deportation to a concentration camp like many of their neighbors and friends because Mr. Spitz's father, Yosef, a rabbi, officiated at Jewish burials. In order to avoid saving a second Jewish family, the Nazis appointed Mr. Spitz's mother, Raizel, the teacher for all the town's Jewish children.

Eventually, the Spitz family's exemptions ran out, but because Raizel Spitz had read Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf years earlier, she "understood Nazi ideas" and "refused to go where Hitler wanted to send us," Mr. Spitz said.

Knowing they would be caught by the Nazis or Slovakian partisans if they stayed in town, the Spitz family went into the mountains outside Dolny Kubin and dug a shelter in the hillside, supporting it with a wooden framework they crafted by hand. They spent seven months – more than 200 hungry, cold, dark days – in the shelter, eating snow and ice, leaves, and frozen mushrooms and berries, and under constant threat of discovery by Nazis and partisans who roamed the forest looking for them despite knee-deep snow.

In April 1945, the Spitz family was discovered by Ukrainian Red Army partisans who initially planned to murder them, but miraculously did not. The family re-entered their shelter and remained there for two months, emerging when the war was

"We crawled out exhausted, weak, sick, and almost starved to death, but we were alive and Hitler was dead," Mr. Spitz told the students, who sat in near silence as they listened, captivated by his story.

Having been forced out of school at the age of 11, Mr. Spitz returned to his studies after the war. He wanted to become an artist, but was forced to pur-



Tibor Spitz and with his wife, Noemi, with students Madelyn Decker (second from left), Myrlene Pierre, and Gavin Richter in front of a large display board created by students to welcome and honor Mr. Spitz during his visit. The board displays one of Mr. Spitz's favorite words, "courage."

sue chemical engineering by the Soviet-controlled Czechoslovakian government. Shortly after his 1967 marriage to fellow Holocaust survivor Noemi Eichler, Mr. Spitz was sent to Cuba on a two-year assignment to overhaul glass factories there. After nine months, he and his wife flew home to Czechoslovakia for a visit. On their return trip to Cuba, they escaped during a refueling stop in Gander, Newfoundland, and spent five years as refugees before settling in Canada and eventually moving to the United States.

After his retirement from engineering at the age of 68, Mr. Spitz pursued his longtime dream of becoming an artist and has since shown his paintings and sculptures all over the world. His "revenge" against the Nazis, he says, was the exhibit of his works in a Prague museum that was allegedly planned as a showcase of artifacts from an "extinct race" after the Nazis completed their plan to exterminate all Jewish people.

Following Mr. Spitz's talk, students asked him many insightful questions, including: how the Holocaust has affected his relationships and his art; whether the colors he uses in his paintings are symbolic of anything; how he maintained hope during the war years; how people today can fight bigotry; and how he feels about Holocaust deniers.

Before leaving Mt. Marion, Mr. Spitz stopped to view the Holocaust-themed poems and artwork on display in the hall outside the sixth grade classrooms. The drawings depicted some of the horrors the Nazis perpetrated on Jewish people and others, and many of the poems asked the question: "Why?" After gazing at the art and poems for a long time, Mr. Spitz reached out to hug the students.

"This," he said, pointing at the bulletin board, "is where humanity begins."

## "Every one of you possesses the capability to bring the world ba





## Danielle Frederickson and Audrey Trossen are Top Two at SHS

Two young women, one fascinated by chemistry and the other a literature lover who might someday be the next J.K. Rowling, earned the top spots in the Saugerties High School (SHS) Class of 2015. This year's valedictorian is Danielle Frederickson. The salutatorian is Audrey Trossen.

Danielle, the daughter of Deanna Sweeney and James Frederickson, spent the early years of her educational career at Cahill and finished them at

Riccardi. Despite graduating from SHS with a 100.54 average, Danielle said she was "kind of in disbelief" when she learned she was valedictorian.

While carrying a course load that ultimately included six of the seven Advanced Placement classes offered at SHS, Danielle juggled extracurricular activities that included being a member of National Honor Society and playing flute in the school band. She also sang in the choir at her church, St. Mary of the Snow, and was a confirmation retreat team leader there as well.

An avid reader, Danielle started her own book review blog, the Pocket Book Critic, in the summer before her sophomore year. When she finds a bit of down time from studying, volunteering, and reviewing books, she's "addicted to Pinterest" and especially enjoys pinning jokes and animal pictures.

Danielle said that many of her teachers influenced at SHS her positively, but she had special praise for those who were part of her senior year: business teacher Jacqueline Hayes; English teacher Steve Stellevato; math teacher Debra Cacchillo; French teacher Lynn Gore; and music teacher Marisa Trees.

Danielle will attend Siena College in Albany this fall and plans to pursue a career involving chemistry, her favorite subject at SHS. "It gives you a whole different worldview," she said, adding that she's fascinated by how the world works at the cellular level.

She said that leaving high school and moving on to



Valedictorian Danielle Frederickson, left, and Salutatorian Audrey Trossen.

college is "so exciting" but also "bittersweet. I'm going to miss a lot of people here."

Salutatorian Audrey Trossen is the daughter of Amy and Tim Trossen. She attended Riccardi during the early years of her education. The rank of salutatorian was not one she actively sought, calling it instead a "really nice surprise" that came with her graduating average of 99.8

Audrey has been active in extracurricular activities while

at SHS. One of the co-founders, and vice-president, of the school's new Science Club, she also served as secretary of the National Honor Society and president of the Gay-Straight Alliance. She plays the alto saxophone, and works at a summer camp run by the Kingston-based liveaction role-playing company Wayfinder Experience.

A well-rounded student with many interests, Audrey enjoys writing and finds language "super interesting," but she also likes science and learned to love math in her junior and senior years, "probably due to Ms. Cacchillo." Other influential teachers are the same ones Danielle noted, along with science teacher Michael Cooper.

Audrey's hobbies include watching movies, spending time with her friends, baking, and reading, particularly middle grade novels like Percy Jackson's Olympians series and the Circle of Magic series by Tamora Pierce. In fact, becoming the author of books for middle grade readers is one of the possible career options on her horizon.

Whatever her ultimate career goal turns out to be, Audrey will pursue it at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, this fall.

With all the change and challenge of college ahead, Audrey said she's "excited and scared out of my mind at the same time." In her speech at graduation, she said the feeling is similar to what she felt when she started preschool. But, as she reminded her classmates, "no goodbye is goodbye forever."



#### **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

The students who spoke wrapped their advice in metaphors from science to the arts.

Class president Phoebe Defino explained that there are many dying galaxies in the solar system that can be brought back to life by the explosion of a single star.

"There's not that much difference between you and the stars," Defino told her classmates, urging them to follow their dreams with an explosion of passion to change the world. "Every one of you possesses the capability to bring the world back to life with your talents, your ingenuity, and your star power."

Vice-president Marissa Hogan took inspiration for her speech from a creative writing assignment she wrote about a dying pen. She explained that, unlike pencils, which come with the

## Saugerties

ck to life with your talents, your ingenuity, and your star power."



Technical Center Valedictorian, Lucas Hufnagel.

### Cahill Elementary

Having met all challenges of the last seven years, the members of the Lawrence M. Cahill School Grade 6 class tossed their caps in the air on June 22 and "graduated" from elementary school.

Wearing white mortarboards and surrounded by supportive family and friends, the 53 members of the class celebrated their transition to junior high school at the annual moving-up ceremony in the Cahill gymnasium.

"Thanks for a great year," said physical education teacher Steve Below, one of several faculty members who presented awards to the students for everything from academic excellence and outstanding attendance and top physical fitness and no overdue library books.

Teachers Deborah Ciccone-Yaeger and William Hanson shared their memories of a year filled with study about everything from wolves to brain hemispheres to Shakespeare, as well as their thoughts about the students who will be part of the Saugerties High School Class of 2021.

"This group is filled with surprises," said Ciccone-Yeager, adding that there are "many underdogs" in the class and many students who are destined for success but are "just beginning to tap into their greatness. We truly enjoyed teaching them."

Hanson agreed, calling the students exceptionally kind and hard-working. "It was an absolute honor to work with you guys. We'll miss you, but we're proud to send you to junior high."

Cahill Principal Dawn Scannapieco told the students that the next six years will go fast and urged them to make the most of it. "Have fun, always smile, and always be kind to each other." Quoting Dr. Seuss's now classic book "Oh, the Places You'll Go," she said, "And will you succeed? Yes! You will, indeed! (98 and ¾ percent guaranteed.) Kids, you'll move mountains. You're off to great places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So...get on your way!"



Wearing traditional graduation caps, Cahill Grade 6 students celebrate their big moment.



The many award-winning Grade 6 Morse "graduates" included this group of young ladies.

## Morse Elementary

Ahard-working and talented class of Grade 6 students said good-bye to Grant D. Morse Elementary School on June 23 at the annual moving-up ceremony.

"I commend you all on a job well done," said Principal Don Dieckmann, who took over as principal when the "graduates" were in Grade 1. "It has been a pleasure and an honor being your principal."

Dieckmann said that the 47 students who will be part of the Saugerties High School Class of 2021 were empowered and challenged during their years at Morse and had many great experiences, from Lip Sync and field trips to the Just Print It news program and the annual Mustang Bowl football game. Dieckmann thanked the teachers for helping the students have those experiences and also expressed his appreciation to the PTA for always being there at "any event, big or small."

Morse alumni and Saugerties High School seniors Curtis Jorgensen and Allison Joers shared some of the wisdom they have attained in the years since they were in Grade 6. Both seniors urged the students to get involved in activities and make lots of friends. Jorgensen told them that he believes hard work is the key to success and reminded them that the most important thing they can do is be themselves. "If you just be yourself, everything else will fall into place, I promise."

Nearly 90 awards were given to the students for achievement in every subject area, as well as for exceeding reading goals, achieving perfect attendance, and displaying outstanding citizenship and effort.

Neve ONeal, who earned multiple honors, including Best All-Around Student, said her memories of Morse include "teachers stuffing our brains to the brim with knowledge." But she's certain that she and her classmates are ready for whatever junior high school may bring.

"It's finally our time to shine," she said.

#### Morse Elementary Kindergarten Students "Graduate"

On a recent sunny morning, 45 young students at the Grant D. Morse Elementary School donned their homemade caps and official gowns to take part in the school's first-ever Kindergarten graduation. According to Morse Principal Don Dieckmann, this event represents a new tradition he hopes to continue at Morse.

The gowns worn by the little graduates were provided, thanks to the generosity of the Morse PTA. Mr. Dieckmann

reminded parents to be sure to return them at the end of the ceremony so that future Kindergarten classes will be able to walk proudly in their caps and gowns as well.

After the ceremony, graduates and their parents filled the cafeteria for a brief reception and light refreshments. In addition to wishing the young graduates well with bright flowers and balloons, a good time was had by all!



## Saugerties



Grade 6 "grads" at Mt. Marion were all smiles on Moving-Up Day.

#### Mt. Marion Elementary

Grade 6 students at Mt. Marion Elementary School wrapped up a year of "changes and challenges, hard work, and lots and lots of fun" on June 24 as they prepared to move on to junior high school.

The annual moving-up ceremony, described by Principal Carole Kelder as an official way of recognizing the students' big step into their new lives, celebrated seven years' worth of achievement and growth for the 47 Grade 6 "graduates."

Kelder praised the students for their hard work and determination and reminded them of the many things they have learned and experienced throughout the past year. Among them were the study of ancient Egypt and Greek mythology, work on behalf of charity, the chance to try out being engineers, and an opportunity to "discover what courage looks like" through a presentation by Holocaust survivor Tibor Spitz.

Many students received awards for academic achievement and outstanding behavior and two graduation-themed bulletin boards in the school lobby show that they're more than prepared for the challenges ahead. In their own words, the graduates plan to make more friends, read more books, try out for more sports, stay organized, and learn about everything from architecture to film-making when they get to Saugerties Junior High School.

At the moving-up ceremony, the Grade 6 students also heard from classmates Hailie TerBush and Nicholas Wolf, who shared some of their personal experiences of growth and happiness at Mt. Marion. Hailie said the school became a second home to her and thanked her "awesome" teachers for their support, while Nicholas, who experienced bullying at his former school in Florida, expressed gratitude to his classmates for the "sense of acceptance and confidence" he has received from them.

"I'm excited but a little bit nervous, too," Nicholas said of facing junior high, then added that he's nonetheless looking forward to "crazy adventures."

Kelder told the students that they're ready for the next step and reminded them to study hard, take care of one another, and remember where they came from. "There are great things coming," she said.

#### Riccardi Elementary

With hearts full of pride and happy memories, Grade 6 students at Charles M. Riccardi School left elementary school behind on June 18 and looked toward a bright future in junior high school.

Surrounded by family, friends, and the faculty and staff who have supported them for seven years, the 43 "graduates" celebrated their big moment at the school's annual moving-up ceremony.

"This is a time filled with excitement and anticipation," said Riccardi Principal Sue Osterhoudt, who expressed her pride in the students' accomplishments and reminded them, "Each of you is special in your own way."

The soon-to-be Grade 7 students got advice from Saugerties High School senior Bradley Brandt, who urged them to start off on the right foot in junior high school by being friendly and kind to others as well as themselves, avoiding procrastination, and facing the future fearlessly.

"Don't let what-ifs or what-could-have-beens define you and don't let fear shape who you are," Brandt said.

More than 20 students received honors and awards at the ceremony, but Osterhoudt reminded all the students that they become winners automatically when they do their best. "A good work ethic will open doors for you in school and in life," she said, leaving the students with the Riccardi motto, "Work hard and be kind."

Students Emily Sherman and Donovan Barros shared happy memories of school trips, scavenger hunts, and many moments of learning. Emily thanked the Grade 5 and Grade 6 teachers for making the class's last two years "phenomenal and eventful" and the teachers received cheers and applause from parents and guests.

"Our years at Riccardi have been amazing," Donovan said. "I can't wait to see what challenges junior high has in store for us."



Young men from Riccardi get ready to move up to Grade 7.

Riccardi Congratulates Class of 2027

Riccardi Elementary School's littlest learners marked a momentous occasion on June 23 as they graduated from Kindergarten.

The 27 students in Mrs. Kilmer's and Mrs. Murphy's classes celebrated the end of their first year of school with plenty of pomp, not to mention songs and smiles.

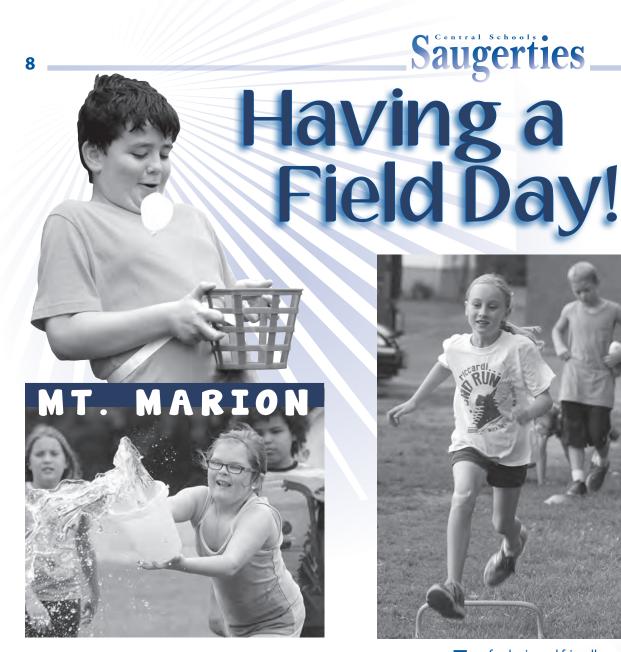
Wearing homemade graduation caps decorated with their handprints, the students performed a short play, "Let's Have a Party in a Tree," before a proud audience of family and friends.

Each student received a certificate and binders jammed full of a year's worth of colorful, creative artwork and poems were on display for guests to look through.

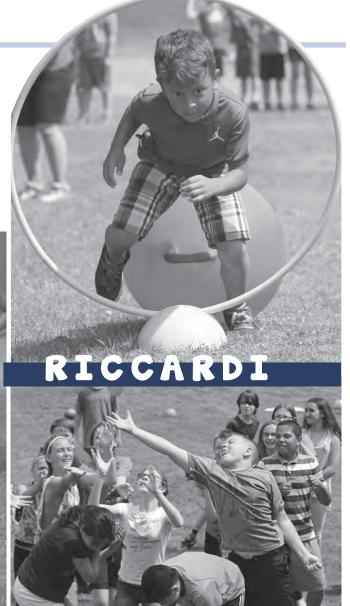
Aidan Winecoff, a student in Mrs. Murphy's class, said he felt "really good" before the start of the graduation ceremony, but that he was definitely ready for summer vacation to start "so I can take a break."

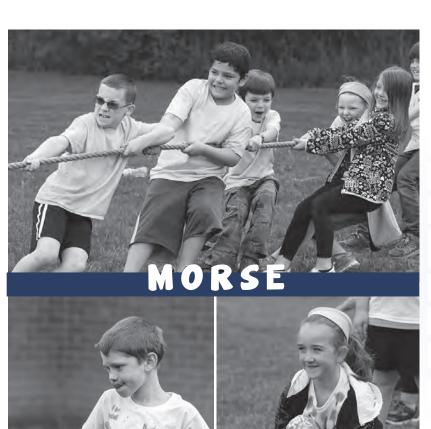
The 27 Riccardi graduates and their peers at Morse, Mt. Marion, and Cahill will someday become the Saugerties High School graduating class of 2027.











un, fresh air, and friendly competition scored big in May and June as the four Saugerties elementary schools each held its annual Field Day.

More than a dozen different stations designed by the District's physical education teachers kept kids hopping, not to mention running, jumping, leaping, and crawling. From the wet and wild fireman's brigade at Cahill and Morse's tug-of-war to musical chairs at Riccardi and monster ball at Mt. Marion, students enjoyed spending the day with friends, and smiles were as plentiful as sunshine.

The dedication of school staff, the help of many parent volunteers, and the support of the school PTAs and local merchants ensured that every Saugerties student had a field day on field day!

