



MIDLAKES.ORG

# MIDLAKES JOURNAL

PHELPS-CLIFTON SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE I  
NOVEMBER 2022

## INSIDE THIS EDITION

- SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE ..... PAGE 2
- MIDLAKES THEATRE ..... PAGE 3
- CAPITAL PROJECT ..... PAGES 4-5
- SPIRIT WEEK ..... PAGE 6
- CALENDAR ..... PAGE 7
- CLAY TARGET TEAM ..... PAGE 8

## FIND MORE AT MIDLAKES.ORG



Midlakes Elementary School launches a Safety Patrol with sixth graders spreading high fives, hugs, and kindness.



The Class of 2023 at Midlakes High School comes together for its first official sunrise and class yearbook photograph.

# PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

At the start of the academic year, Midlakes unveiled new core values to promote clear expectations and positive behaviors to all students.

Extensive input from the staff and community was gathered to identify the values of **RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, INDEPENDENCE, and KINDNESS** through the district's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) initiative.

PBIS is a research-based approach implemented to provide a basic level of support to students on appropriate behaviors and expectations to improve school culture and reduce problem behaviors in a nurturing way.

In establishing a few simple and positively stated values across all school settings, students receive consistent and repeatable messages at Midlakes. Meanwhile, it allows teachers, staff, and community groups to play a significant role in fostering an environment that is predictable, positive, and equitable.

Research shows that positive reinforcement has a greater impact on student behavior than immediate punishment.

As a result, school staff are expected to tie student behavior to the four core values. For example, a teacher might say, "Thank you for being respectful by being an active listener." Respect is the core value while active listening is the expectation.

A committee of school staff has placed posters and other materials around campus to remind students of the core values.

Also, the committee encourages community and youth-based organizations to adopt the language and expectations to help increase consistency and overall effectiveness in achieving academic and social goals. ■



### LEARN MORE

Scan the QR Code with your phone to learn about Midlakes' Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports initiative.



HIGHLIGHTS



**LOCATION FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS**

Meetings of the Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School District Board of Education will be held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, room 103 of Midlakes Elementary School, unless otherwise noted.

When available, meetings will be streamed to the district's website and YouTube channel. Board of Education meeting dates, agendas, and other information are posted to the Board of Education's new BoardDocs site, which can be found in the "Board Info" section under the Board of Education drop-down menu at Midlakes.org.

Please contact the District Office at (315) 548-6420 for further information. ■

**ALTMAN, WILKES ELECTED BOARD PRESIDENT, VP**

The Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School District Board of Education elected Tracy Altman as President and Amber Wilkes as Vice President in July.

The Board of Education is comprised of seven volunteers elected to serve three-year terms. The Board responsibilities include:

- Hiring and employing a Superintendent in charge of the day-to-day operations of the district.
- Establishing district-wide policies.
- Developing an annual budget for public approval.
- Voting on the Superintendent's recommendations. ■

**A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT**

# OUR FIRST 100 DAYS

*Optimism surrounds our schools as we strive for excellence in and out of the classroom.*

*Note: Mr. Nicholas Ganster was appointed by the Board of Education as Superintendent of the Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School District during a special meeting in September. He assumed the role on Tuesday, Oct. 11.*

I wanted to take a moment to thank everyone in the greater Phelps-Clifton Springs school community for opening their arms and providing such a warm welcome.

I cannot count the number of positive messages, congratulations, and well wishes that have come my way since the Board of Education announced my appointment in September. I want to thank everyone but especially all the students who played a hand in producing my welcome video, those at our pep rallies and Homecoming game for introducing themselves, and Evan Everson, Sophie Caves, Manny Galliher, Jenny Iraci, and Nauvoo Dorr for serving as guides as I toured both school buildings on my very first day.

The reception has filled me with gratitude, hope, and optimism — gratitude for the kindness and generosity that I have experienced since being appointed, hope for brighter days ahead as we distance ourselves from the complexities of the past two years, and optimism for what lies ahead for our students and staff at Midlakes and beyond.

As we roll up our sleeves, my first 100 days will be focused on five key areas that will help me listen to you and learn as much as I can about the Eagle way.

**Listening and Understanding:** Listening is one of the keys to being an effective superintendent. I have already begun meeting with every member of our administrative team, union leadership, along with student and community organizations. My only agenda item for these meetings will be to listen, with the sole goal of gaining a deeper understanding of our schools from multiple perspectives.

**Meeting and Greeting:** I plan to attend as many school events as I can to support our stu-

dents and community. Please do not hesitate to introduce yourself and strike up a conversation.

**Classrooms and Learning:** As a former teacher, it is important to me to stay connected to our students; there is no place more critical to stay connected to students than in our classrooms. The classroom is where our youngest learners establish a firm foundation for future success, our middle school students grow and mature, and our oldest learners begin to pursue their dreams. Maximizing time in the classroom will keep us all focused on what matters the most: Our students.

**Capital Improvement Project:** As the new superintendent, seeing improvements to our facilities happening in real time has been a great feeling. I have seen new concrete poured for the Elementary School bus loop, new asphalt placed at the Transportation Facility, and a newly graded football/lacrosse field beginning to take shape. With the next phase of the project expected to begin in the coming weeks and months, I will be working to understand the depth and scope of our project to ensure that we provide the best possible facilities for our students, staff, and community.

**Promoting PBIS:** You may have seen the posters about our four core values focused on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. As a district, we are working hard to reinforce **Respect, Responsibility, Independence, and Kindness** among students. These important values were developed with our school community, and we plan to share their importance with families and our partners in the coming months.

Again, it is a privilege to serve as your Superintendent of Schools and I am excited to embark on this next chapter of my career in such a supportive community that strives for excellence every day. I look forward to working with you in helping our school district build upon past successes to become the best version of itself! ■

— *Nicholas Ganster, Superintendent*



**MIDLAKES THEATRE EXPERIENCE**



## 'THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST'

Set in Victorian London, Midlakes' next theatrical production promises to bring a "trivial comedy for serious people" to the Black Box Theatre with Oscar Wilde's masterful "The Importance of Being Earnest."

The play features Jack Worthing (Sarah Brown) and Algernon Moncrieff (Mara Deisering), two young bachelors who create alter egos named Earnest to escape their own tiresome lives while trying to win over the hearts of two women who claim to only love men named Earnest.

Hilarity, confusion, and misadventure ensue as they struggle to keep up with their stories. Director Layna Gray, a history teacher at Midlakes, selected the play for its historical popularity.

"People love looking at the Victorians," she said. "They've just got such a proper little society going on, but then all of this dark underbelly, too. Wilde does a really good job poking fun at how people in the upper classes hold themselves to this standard but then at the same time make all of these underhanded, manipulative moves to keep themselves sort of at the top."

The student cast features Sarah Brown (Jack Worthing), Mara Deisering (Algernon Moncrieff), Heather Belcher (Gwendolen Fairfax), Leia Slack (Cecily Cardew), Nikki Szalay (Lady Bracknell), Bobby Lally (Rev. Canon Chasuble), Kaylynn Judson (Miss Prism), and Trip Dean (Lane/Merriman). Claudia Polisito, Elisha Rossman and Gabe White are understudies.

Craig Deisering is serving as Set Design and Technical Director and Ross Gifford as Lighting Director. Stacy Liberati and Kristen Deisering join Gray in costume design. Publicity graphics are handled by Elisha Rossman, Mary Quinn, and Leah Newton.

**TICKET INFORMATION**

**WHAT:** "The Importance of Being Earnest" by Oscar Wilde.

**WHEN:** 7:30 p.m. Nov. 10, 7:30 p.m. Nov. 11, and 2 & 7:30 p.m., Nov. 12.

**WHERE:** Midlakes Black Box Theatre, 1554 Route 488, Clifton Springs

**ADMISSION:** \$8, for adults; \$7 for students and senior citizens.

**TICKET SALES:** Midlakes High School Main Office, Phelps Hometown Pharmacy, Local Palette, and Sandy's Floral Gallery in Clifton Springs. Tickets are an additional \$2 at the door.

The Stage Manager is Bella Herendeen. The set is built by Bobby Lally, Margaret Lally, Bob Belcher, Claudia Polisito, Riley Potter, Anthony Cooper, Josh Newton, Adriana DeRuyter, Leah Newton, and others. The tech and stage crew includes Hailey Barber, T.J. Delpriore, Nauvoo Dorr, Ashlyn Knapp, Jacob Lannon, Amelia Maslyn, Carter Maslyn, Stevie Mitchelson, Jacob O'Brien, Breanna Plante, Ella Schreder, Jonah Spangenberg, and Amelia Wilkes.

Gray added that the students have jumped right in from the start in building chemistry and helping to make some of their own character decisions.

"The kids have just run with it, and it is just wonderful to see," said Gray, who graduated from SUNY Geneseo with a minor in theatre, where she focused on directing. "They work very well together." ■

HIGHLIGHTS



MARGO LACURE



TIMOTHY DREIS

**ADMINISTRATORS JOIN MIDLAKES**

In addition to filling several teaching and support positions, the district has appointed four administrators to fill important roles in supporting students.

Jessica VanDamme (K-6) and Laura Van Laeken (7-12) entered the academic year as Administrative Dean of Students. Margo Lacure joined the district as its Multi-Tiered System of Support/Community Schools Coordinator, and Timothy Dreis is the Director of Transportation.

VanDamme, Van Laeken, and Lacure will help Midlakes staff grow student connections, reinforce positive behaviors, and address the social-emotional health of students. Lacure will also help strengthen school and community partnerships.

Meanwhile, Dreis brings several years of transportation and managerial experience from the private sector to the district.

He takes over a department that has a dispatcher, three mechanics, four monitors, and 24 drivers.

For a video introducing new staff to the community, visit the Midlakes Schools YouTube channel at [YouTube.com/watch?v=sjOr1H-K9C44](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjOr1H-K9C44). ■

SAVE THE MEMORIES!!!

# YEARBOOKS

Scan the code or visit Midlakes Yearbooks online at [Midlakes.org/60ma19/2248](https://midlakes.org/60ma19/2248).



# CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE

Returning students and staff at Midlakes schools undoubtedly noticed a few changes to campus as well as a few large construction vehicles as crews continued work on the Capital Improvement Project approved by voters in 2019.

The summer months allowed workers to complete, or bring to near completion, several portions of the \$15.6 million project in time for the start of school.



## PARKING/TRAFFIC

Crews were able to substantially improve traffic flow at the Midlakes Elementary School by widening the parent drop-off loop, adding and repairing sidewalks, installing new curbing, and building a new staff-only parking lot accessible by Route 96 with nearly 80 additional spaces.

Parking areas at the Elementary School were also repaired, resealed, and striped. Drainage was improved and repaired in several areas. Handicapped parking was moved closer to the school and a new blue "stay back" line was added to help keep students away from school buses during arrival and dismissal.

The new patterns and wider sidewalks help ensure that families should never find a reason to cross school roadways.

## BUS GARAGE

Several repairs were made to the Transportation Facility, where portions of the building had deteriorated or were damaged over the years. Gutters were repaired to prevent icing and related safety hazards. Portions of the parking lot and driveways were repaired to improve traffic flow, and drainage of the facility was also improved. New gas and water lines were installed at the maintenance building.

Crews also installed a new bus lift, which was planned separately from the capital project.

## PLAYING FIELD

Grading and resurfacing work saw crews digging up the main stadium field to improve drainage and the playing surface. The playing surface will be sodded, graded with natural grass, and given time to rest to allow the grass to take hold.

Work is expected to be completed in October with athletic teams scheduled to get on the field in the spring of 2024.

## BARN, FUELING STATION

Crews built a new salt barn, just south of the Transportation Facility, capable of holding 60 tons of salt. The barn will improve the efficiency of clearing roads and sidewalks during a snow emergency.

Also, a new 10,000-gallon fueling station was constructed to allow the district to help control fuel costs by competitively bidding for fuel. The station will hold up to 7,000 gallons of diesel fuel and 3,000 gallons of gasoline for school buses, plows, and other equipment.

## OTHER WORK

A new domestic hot water system is up and running at the Middle School. New bleachers were installed in the Middle School gymnasium and new appliances were installed in the Family and Consumer Science room in the Middle/High School. Fencing was added to new bio-filtered drainage areas at the Elementary School.

A separate slate of work paid for through the state's Smart School Bond Act brought several security enhancements and infrastructure improvements to Midlakes separate from the capital project approved.

Totaling approximately \$1.7 million, work included upgraded cabling and infrastructure to support a new communication system, call buttons, additional video and video storage, monitoring of all exterior doors, re-keyed entrances and fob readers, new digital clocks, an upgraded alert system, and other enhancements to increase security.



## HIGHLIGHTS



## HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

School record holders, Section V champions, collegiate athletes, and one of the most successful teams in program history were celebrated when seven individuals and the 2011-2012 wrestling team were inducted into Midlakes' Athletics Hall of Fame in October.

In addition to the wrestling team, Tyler Brooks-Lambert, Alessandra (Ali Hemminger) Masso, Katie Baldwin, Jackie Gallahan Blake, Conner Fox, Greg Marks, and John Rau were recognized during a luncheon at Club 86 in Geneva.

Plaques of their accomplishments will be displayed at Midlakes High School, and each inductee was recognized during Homecoming.

Inductees from the Hall of Fame Class of 2021 and 2022 were recognized during the luncheon, which was postponed last year due to the pandemic. Learn how to submit nominees for the Class of 2023 at [Midlakes.org/domain/27](http://Midlakes.org/domain/27).

## 2022 GRADUATES AWARDED \$146K

Graduating seniors at Midlakes High School received \$146,336 in scholarships and other financial support for outstanding academic achievements during the school's annual Commencement Ceremony in June.

The awards came from local community organizations and individual donors and were announced in front of family and friends by Midlakes High School Principal Frank Bai-Rossi.



# SPIRIT WEEK

Midlakes celebrated Spirit/Homecoming Week in October with a number of fun themed days, spirited pep rallies, and celebrations that brought students, staff and alumni together. For more photos of the week and other events, visit [Midlakes.org](http://Midlakes.org).



## LOOKING AHEAD

### HIGHLIGHTS

The Midlakes Aquatic Center offers opportunities for the community to swim all year long, except when school closes during a snow emergency and most holidays.

Morning, family, lap and open swim as well as water aerobics are offered throughout the week:

- **Family/Open/Lap Swim:** 6-8 p.m., Fridays.
- **Morning Swim:** 6-7:30 a.m., Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
- **Water Aerobics:** 7:30-8:30 a.m., Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

#### Winter Swim Lessons (Session II)

Those interested in swim lessons for their child should email Jack Hauber ([jhauber@midlakes.org](mailto:jhauber@midlakes.org)) by December 30. Be sure to include parent's and child's name, parent's email and phone number, and desired lesson level and time if Level 1.

- **Level 1** lessons are 30 minutes long, from 9-9:30 a.m. and 9:30-10 a.m.
- **Levels 2, 3, 4 and 5** have hour-long lessons from 9-10 a.m.
- **Lesson dates** are Jan. 7, 14 & 21, Feb. 4 & 11. All dates are subject to change.

For more information, call (315) 548-6451 or visit the district's website at [Midlakes.org/AquaticCenter](http://Midlakes.org/AquaticCenter).

### DON'T MISS IT



### VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION

Midlakes Elementary School plans to continue its tradition of recognizing and honoring local servicemen and women with a parade at school.

**DATE:** Thursday, Nov 10. Time: TBA.

### BAND INFO NIGHT

Elementary Band Director Lynn Morris will be joined by Tim Chaapel of Mobile Music to discuss Midlakes' music program, instruments, fees, and more with any parent or guardians of students in grades 3-6 interested in Band.

**DATE:** The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 17. For more information, contact Ms. Morris, school or your child's teacher.



## THIS MONTH & NEXT

### NOVEMBER

**VETERANS DAY PARADE**  
Nov. 10, Elementary School

**'THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST'**  
7:30 p.m., Nov. 10  
7:30 p.m., Nov. 11  
2 & 7:30 p.m., Nov. 12

**VETERANS DAY**  
Nov. 11 (NO SCHOOL)

**WINTER SPORTS PRACTICE BEGINS**  
Nov. 14 (JV & Varsity)

**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
6:30 p.m., Nov. 14

**SPORTS PHYSICALS**  
Nov. 17 (Registration Required)

**BAND INFO. NIGHT**  
7 p.m., Nov. 17 (Grades 3-6)

**SENIOR CLASS TRIP**  
Nov. 19-22

**THANKSGIVING RECESS**  
Nov. 23-25 (NO SCHOOL)

### DECEMBER

**ELEMENTARY PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES,**  
Dec. 6-8, Early Dismissal UPK-6

**MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL CONCERT**  
7 p.m., Dec. 14, Band & Chorus

**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
6:30 p.m., Dec. 18

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONCERT**  
7 p.m., Dec. 20, Band & Chorus

**HOLIDAY RECESS**  
Dec. 26-30, School Reopens for Classes on Tuesday, Jan. 3

**BLOOD DRIVE**  
9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Jan. 5, Midlakes High School Gymnasium

*Events subject to change. Find school calendars, sports schedules and more under the "Community" tab at [Midlakes.org](http://Midlakes.org).*

## HIGHLIGHTS

### NEHS RAISES NEARLY \$9K

Midlakes National Elementary Honor Society exceeded its fundraising expectations by donating nearly \$9,000 to the American Cancer Society in support of its annual Relay for Life of the Finger Lakes in June at Geneva Lakefront Park.

Overall, Midlakes students raised \$8,776.83 for the American Cancer Society by soliciting donations from family and friends and selling stuffy grams for Valentine's Day. NEHS earned a Platinum recognition for its efforts.

"We are extremely proud of our students and their efforts to give back to our community," said Heather Bradley, co-adviser of NEHS with Erin Altman. "They jumped right in and really wanted to make a difference in the community."

Students set a personal fundraising goal of \$100, but many surpassed the goal. They included:

- Nicholas Egburston, \$1,012
- Kendall DeBrock, \$714
- Alaina Davies, \$691
- Riley Kuhn, \$423
- Riley Marion, \$400
- Allison DeRuyter, \$400
- Heather Bradley, \$373
- Mackenzie Mattoon, \$255
- Zoey Overslaugh, \$230
- Christopher Meyers, \$200
- Sophia Schutt, \$173
- Rylan Potter, \$170
- Molly Lolis, \$159
- Giuliana Gallagher, \$158
- Harmony Dean, \$150
- Liberty Wickings, \$150
- Olivia Yeatts, \$150
- Troy Trzeciak, \$145
- Emmanuel Galliher, \$140
- Spencer Fox, \$132
- Gavin Vanderwall, \$130
- Sydney Rodriguez, \$123
- Alivia Dejohn, \$110

# CLAY TARGET CLUB FINISHES ON TOP

The Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School Board of Education recognized the Midlakes High School Trap team for finishing atop the team standings during the New York State Clay Target League Championships held in Cicero last June.

Senior Jameson Martin paced the team, which included junior Brady Day, sophomores Teddy Altman and Collin Chimera, and Midlakes graduate Aric Potter, to a top team score of 460 out of 500 — just two points ahead of the second-highest scoring team.

Martin hit 98 out of 100 targets to finish third in the overall standings and was named to the 2022 Trap All-State Team. Potter tied for fifth place with 96 out of 100. Altman finished with a score of 93, Day had 91, and Chimera scored 82.

"In my opinion, it is one of the hardest sports you can do," said Martin, who was encouraged to participate in the sport by Midlakes graduate Nita Schumacher, a coach on the team and former participant. "The level of focus you need is tremendous. When I am shooting, the only thing I think about is the next bird."

Potter hit 24 out of 25 targets in his four rounds.

"I didn't think I was going to place," he said. "There were several better shooters than me. The last round we shot, I hit all of mine up until the last shot and I missed ... I went right over it



because I was like, 'Yup I got this.'"

Trap shooting is widely described as one of the fastest-growing scholastic team activities. Competitors try to hit fast-moving "clay pigeons" to score points. The pigeon moves erratically at speeds of up to 50 mph.

Altman joined the team after going on hunting trips with his father.

"It's something that you can do to take your mind off of other things," he said. "I just enjoy it."

Midlakes' Clay Target/Trap/Skeet team was formed about five years ago, with approval from the Board of Education. Participating students are required to complete training and safety certifications prior to the competition. ■

PHELPS-CLIFTON SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Send tips and suggestions to: Newsletter, 1490 State Route 488, Clifton Springs, NY 14432

**NYSRA**  
New York State Reading Association  
AWARD WINNER: 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022



**PHELPS-CLIFTON SPRINGS  
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
1490 STATE ROUTE 488  
CLIFTON SPRINGS, NY 14432

**NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID**

NEWARK, NY 14513  
PERMIT NO. 71

POSTAL PATRON