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SCENE

A look at
activities
in the
Livingston
Manor
School District

A SPECIAL SECTION OF
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Searching for the right vocation, a Manor native comes home

BY KATHY DALEY

Meagan Edwards graduated from Livingston Manor Central School in 2013 and then from SUNY Oneonta. She attended law school for one semester and didn't find it for her.

"I felt lost," said Edwards. "I began to think, how can I help kids in the same situation?"

Aha! School counseling was the

right fit, Edwards thought. She focused on a masters in education at Oneonta while she waitressed full-time. She's now back in Manor, giving guidance and support to pre-kindergarten through eighth grade students.

"I wasn't sure what to expect," said Edwards, "seeing as how my colleagues are my old teachers."

The name Edwards is well-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

An alumna of Livingston Manor Central School, Meagan Edwards is back as a school counselor, navigating students through academic, social and family stresses.

School Scene

A Look Inside the Livingston Manor School District

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known in Manor. Everybody interacts with Meagan's mother, Renee Edwards, who works at the Post Office. Meagan's grandfather ran a well-known local construction company, and the real estate firm Edwards Realty is just as famous.

At the school, it's all fallen into place. Edwards loves her daily work, helping students make their way through academic, personal, parental and social pressures.

In the elementary school, for example, she helps kids with coping mechanisms and how to understand their own feelings. In the middle school, she can also concentrate on encouraging a college and career focus.

Working alongside longtime school counselor Danielle DalCero, Edwards goes into classrooms to focus on the social and emotional "literacy" that will enable them to make positive choices throughout life.

She does group counseling and individual counseling. And she

and others co-planned a wellness day for all staff members on a recent Friday, a day when, typically, students work from home.

"We took the afternoon off, all the staff – teachers, secretaries, janitors, cafeteria workers," Edwards said. They offered professional lessons in yoga and pilates, art, and a free lunch donated by Sims Foster of Foster Supply Hospitality.

She and DalCero also encourage on-going fitness work on the part of the adults at the school. For example, a Step Challenge encourages the staff to count the steps they take and then report back for a small prize.

"We're all so stationary. We need to keep moving to get those great endorphins and to keep the body happy," Edwards said.

And that's where the healthy connection to children comes in.

"When the kids see me in the hallways, they might tell me about something they did on the weekend," she said with a grin. "It makes you feel famous."

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Kids show off athletic skills as Manor school live streams games

BY KATHY DALEY

No spectators allowed? No problem. Just stream the athletic contests.

During the first week of February, Livingston Manor began live streaming athletic events, allowing people to see a match as up close and at-the-moment as watching sports on TV.

“The students and families enjoy the opportunity to view the events, even though we know they would rather be able to be there in person, said Christopher Hubert, Director of Technology and Elementary School Principal. “But this form of technology allows us to involve all students’ family members from all over the world to view the event.”

“We know this year has been and continues to be a challenge for everyone,” Hubert added. “With games closed to spectators, this is an example of how

we’re finding ways to keep our students and families involved in school activities from a distance.”

So far, the “folks at home” have been able to enjoy girl and boys JV and Varsity basketball games and more live-streaming options will come later, he said.

It’s especially great in that parents and relatives can watch the events at their leisure.

“With this technology, we have the ability to provide a live stream to differentiate for the busy schedules and diverse needs of our school families,” said Hubert. “We believe this will go a long way in building that ever-important relationship between home and school. If we’re truly invested in building a solid partnership between home and school, offering a streaming option for big events or those that will require collaboration is a no-brainer.”

Technology-wise, the District

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is also in the process of another big move: a campaign to provide students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade with their own Chromebook.

"Fortunately the district saved its Smart Schools Bond money for a rainy day occasion to be able to purchase these devices," said Hubert. "It's been very challenging to obtain the necessary amount of devices for all our students. We've been competing with many other districts across the nation to purchase the Chromebook devices."

"We have received partial inventory of the devices purchased," he said, "and our No. 1 objective was making sure the students who needed a device for remote learning obtained one."

"Our goal is for every student in the 2021-2022 school year to have a device," he said. "This is an exciting time for our district. We believe a Chromebook for each student will lead to an enhanced educational experience, better student organizational skills, and learning and sharing beyond the walls of the conventional classroom."



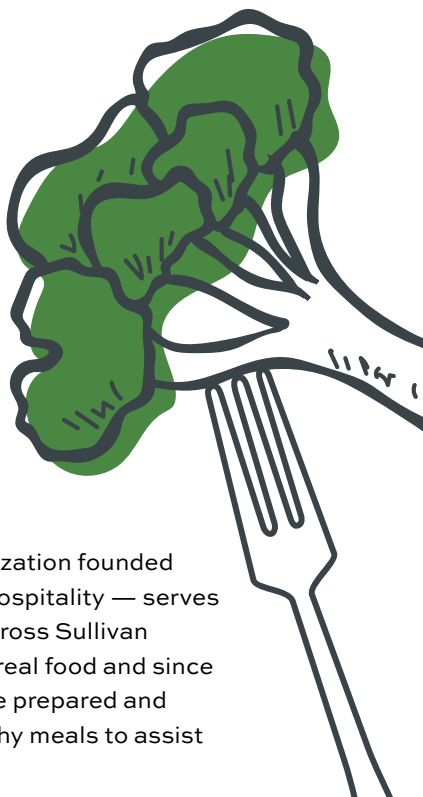
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Livingston Manor Central School live-streamed girl and boys jayvee and varsity basketball games for students and families to enjoy at the moment or later on at their leisure. Above, a recent varsity basketball game against Roscoe.

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Van Gogh inspires students to create their own starry skies

BY KATHY DALEY

In 1889 artist Vincent Van Gogh employed twists and turns in his yellow and white brush-strokes to capture a blazing nighttime sky in "The Starry Night," an oil painting long considered a masterpiece.

Now, during Covid times, elementary art teacher Angelina Coriano introduces her own students to Van Gogh by shooting her own video. There, the kids learn to paint "Owls in the Night Sky," a project inspired by the Van Gogh technique.

"In the videos I introduce the lesson and demonstrate art techniques and show the students how to complete the project. Each video I create is step-by-step instructions for that particular lesson," she said.

For example, students first received a short biography of Van Gogh, supplies needed to do the

project and written directions. Then, they accessed video links in the online platforms Seesaw or Google Classroom.

Coriano's video starts out with the teacher asking students to use a gray piece of paper that has been sent home. With brown paint, they draw a tree limb at the bottom of the paper and then start in with the fun of making

Students at home and at school can enjoy art lessons through teacher Angelina Coriano's step-by-step videos. Here, a Van Gogh-like project for kids borrows from the famous painter's 'Starry Night' painting.

blue, purple and white swirls of stars, just like Van Gogh's.

As the children enjoy the delight of painting, Coriano has calm instrumental music playing in the background. Finally, she walks students through cutting out the owl pieces from brown construction paper. Voila! An owl with big white eyes, yellow beak and white wings perches in peace and solitude against the night sky.

"I shoot my video using my iPhone attached to a tripod," explained Coriano. "I use a special adapter to secure my phone to the tripod. Once I shoot the raw video, I edit the video using iMovie and QuickTime. I also use Pixlr which is a free, web-based photo editing program. As for sound, I use Garage Band to edit sound clips, mix music, and record voice."

She creates her videos mostly for students who are working strictly from home, but the students studying primarily in the school building have access to the videos as well.

"Students love the videos," said Coriano. "I have one student who has started to make me instructional videos of her doing the art projects, and other students are inspired to record their own videos too."



For fun, Elementary School art teacher Angelina Coriano sports a beret and wields a blow-up paintbrush.



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How to mask even the tubas, French horns and clarinets

BY KATHY DALEY

Music teacher Daniel Smith had never sewn a thing in his life. So he went seeking help. The issue: finding “instrument masks” for music students to wear and “bell covers” for the instruments to limit the possible transmission of Covid germs.

So Smith sent out the word.

“When the data from the International Performing Arts Aerosol Study showed that the instrument masks and bell covers could greatly reduce the spread of aerosols in the classroom, I began searching for a way to find and purchase them,” the teacher said.

Scientific research has determined that Covid-19 can be spread by aerosols produced when people speak, laugh, sing or even just breathe.

“Back in August, there were very few of these special pieces of PPE available online but their price was unreasonable,” Smith said, and he began reaching out to the community through social media. He was delighted by the response.

“Members of our community

volunteered to make custom bell covers and masks for students who play woodwind and brass instruments,” he said.

For example, locals Jeanne Smith and Margaret Zanger worked diligently to create custom bell masks for tubas, French horns, and clarinets. Then came the Center for Discovery in Harris, where Nancy Hendrickson and her students crafted the vitally important covers and masks.

“Students at the Center found joy in working to complete such a meaningful project,” said Smith. “Their work kept our band students safe. We can’t thank them enough.”

This school year has also witnessed changes in how music at Manor is appreciated by the public.

“When I heard that we weren’t going to be performing live in the Fall/Winter, I immediately started bringing my personal recording gear into the classroom,” said Smith. “I brought all my mics, my mixer, my macbook. I set it all up and the bands were introduced to a new aspect of music perform-

ance: recording.”

Students recorded in groups and one at a time for a special Halloween chamber performance followed by a virtual Winter Concert.

“Then, on Dec. 23, the middle and high school bands and cho-

rus came together to sing and play holiday music,” Smith said. “We played the classics and broadcasted the performance to every classroom and every virtual student at home, inviting everyone to sing along. It was a unique and memorable experience.”



PHOTO BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MUSIC COMPANY

During Covid, wind instruments are covered with their own masks, and their players wear special masks as well. Here, a photo from the National Educational Music Company of New Jersey illustrates the new rules.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tenth grader Neveaha Jones records vocals in the high school’s new classroom recording studio. After she recorded the track, music teacher Daniel Smith and crew broadcasted her music through the entire school.

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