

SCHOOL

A Special Supplement to the Sullivan County Democrat

SCENE



**A look at activities
in the
Livingston Manor-
Roscoe School
District
Part 1**



Inside Roscoe's First Annual Read-A-Thon

STORY AND PHOTO
BY
PATRICIO ROBAYO

Students at Roscoe Central School are turning pages with a new enthusiasm, thanks to the school's first-ever Read-A-Thon, an initiative launched by the Academic Intervention Support (AIS) Department. Designed to foster a love for reading while adding a touch of friendly competition, the program is already making waves in the classroom and beyond.

The Read-A-Thon, which began in early February, serves as a build-up to Read Across America Week, a nationwide literacy celebration that coincided with Dr. Seuss's birthday on March 2. Throughout the month, students from pre-K to sixth grade log their reading minutes at home and in school, competing for prizes that include medals, book vending machine tokens, and a grand champion title.

"It has been outstanding," said Emily Miner, an Academic

The program has inspired a competitive spirit among students.

Intervention Support provider and middle school social studies teacher. "One thing for sure, I've seen students finishing their assignments and immediately reaching for their independent reading books. It's created an excitement for reading that is wonderful to witness."

The Read-A-Thon features multiple incentives: weekly top readers earn a token for the book vending machine, while the top reader from each grade level receives a medal. The class that accumulates the most reading minutes earns a pizza party, and the overall Grand Champion Reader wins a bookstore gift card.

Jackie Day, another AIS educa-

tor, said that students are particularly thrilled with the book vending machine, which was obtained through a grant. "They're excited to get a new book and press the button," she said. "It's become a huge attraction at the school. They used to only get tokens for their birthdays, so this initiative gives them another opportunity to win books."

The program has inspired a competitive spirit among students. "There's a set of twins in fifth grade who are massive readers," Miner shared. "They keep going back and forth, trying to outdo each other to win the token. It's incredible to see."

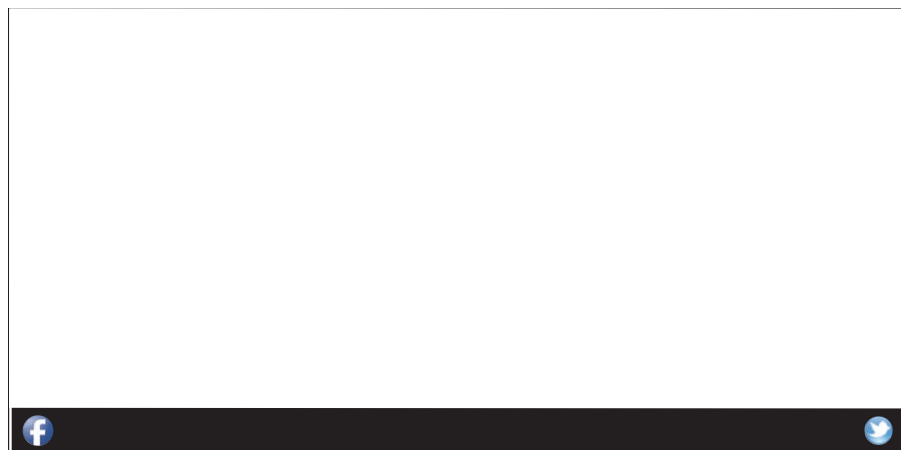
Beyond the Read-A-Thon, the school is also incorporating another literacy initiative known as The Walking Classroom. Funded by a Sullivan 180 grant, this program allows students to listen to audio lessons while walking, blending physical activity with academic en-

richment. "They're getting exercise while learning, and then they write a summary afterward," said sixth-grader Melany, a recent Read-A-Thon winner. "It helps me absorb the information better."

The impact of the Read-A-Thon is already evident. Teachers report that students are more eager to read independently, both at school and at home. "Even kids who weren't necessarily readers before are getting involved," Day said. "They want to participate and track their minutes, and that's exactly what we hoped for."

Parents have also been engaged in the process, ensuring their children log their reading minutes and even reaching out to teachers to make sure their time is counted. "We've had parents messaging us at the last minute, making sure we record their child's minutes correctly," said Day. "That level of involvement is a great sign."

Miner said there was a broader



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The vending machine offers a multitude of different genres of books for children to read!

benefit of the program: recognizing and celebrating students who might not always be in the spotlight.

“We celebrate athletes and performers all the time, but this Read-A-Thon is an opportunity to celebrate students who love to read. There’s a girl who practically hugged the reading chart because she was so excited about her progress,” she said.

“We wear matching shirts every Friday when we collect the logs

that say, ‘Nothing beats reading,’” Day shared. “The only complaint we’ve had is that teachers wanted to join in too!”

As the program wrapped up with the Green Eggs and Ham Breakfast on March 2, where top readers were honored, educators are already looking ahead.

“This is just the beginning,” Miner said. “We want to keep expanding literacy programs and getting kids excited about books.”

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From left, Roscoe teacher and Student Government advisor Pam Carpenter, Anastasia Niforatos, Brooke Coman, Logan Thomas and teacher and advisor Cindy Hyzer.

Roscoe Central High School student government: leadership, spirit and the merger ahead



STORY AND PHOTO BY PATRICIO ROBAYO

At Roscoe Central School District High School, student government isn't

just about planning events—it's about making decisions, keeping students informed, and preparing for the district merger.

Leadership in Action
Student government members help make sure their classmates have a voice, especially regard-

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ing the merger between Roscoe and Livingston Manor school districts. "One thing we've been talking about is making sure students get accurate information about the merger," said Cindy Hyzer, a teacher working with student government.

Pam Carpenter, another advisor, said, "We're making sure students are heard—positives, negatives—and that they know how to find answers."

Sophomores Logan Thomas, Brooke Coman, and Anastasia Niforatos are among the students taking leadership roles. "I wanted to help make decisions and be a part of helping the school," said Coman. Niforatos added, "I also wanted to get involved and help."

Building school spirit

Student government organizes events like Spirit Week and Spirit Day. "Spirit Week is when high school and elementary students dress up to prepare for Spirit Day," said Coman. "Each day has a theme, and you earn points leading up to Spirit Day."

Spirit Day is a long-time tradition with grade-level competitions. "It's a full-day competition where students work as a team for their grades and compete against others," said Carpenter. Hyzer said, "We cover events in different areas so every student can participate in some way."

Preparing for the merger

With the merger coming up, student government is working to make it a smooth process. Niforatos is looking forward to it. "I think we're going to have more opportunities. I want to run for student council after the merger to help make things better."

A big concern is making sure students feel like one school, not two separate groups. "Next year, student council should focus on making sure everyone feels together," said Niforatos. "It shouldn't be Roscoe vs. Manor—it should be all of us."

Hyzer said student leaders are gathering student concerns through class-wide Google Docs. "We've sent out documents so students can share their thoughts, and we can speak for them," she said. "People say they want student input—we'll see how much they listen when the time comes."

Why join Student Government?

For students thinking about joining, current members say go for it. "It's a good way to help your school and your class," said Coman. "It's fun, and it feels good to make decisions that matter."

Niforatos agreed. "You can make a difference in your school. It feels good to be part of the decisions."

For Thomas, the reason is simple. "If you want to help your school and be involved in decisions, join student government."

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