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### Student Government helps others with holiday drive

In November, the Alfred-Almond Student Government launched its annual school-wide food drive to help restock the shelves at local food pantries. The 2016 Food Drive focused on improvement and growth. Representatives met with administrators, researched and provided statistics about the issue of hunger in Allegany county and collected ideas from students, all with the hope of increasing the number of donations.

In the high school, new strategies included providing shopping carts to collect donations, providing plastic bags to each student for his or her initial donation and rewarding the top five donators with a prize. High school students responded to these efforts by bringing in 417 items, compared to only 240 in last year's food drive. Congratulations to the top five donors: Chris Mormino, Bella Powell, Nicole Cline, Amber Weiner and Ben Lloyd.

The elementary school collected an astounding 1,280 items! Mrs. Forshee's fourth-grade class led the charge with 343 of these items. Miss Saxton's fifth-grade class earned the second place reward for having the next highest number of donations, while several classes trailed closely behind.



*Continued on page 2*



*(Above) Students in Ms. Burdick's class box up their donations.*

*(Left) Student Government members used shopping carts to collect food donations.*

## Student Government, continued

The Student Government would like to thank all students and staff who participated in the food drive. The Alfred and Almond food pantry coordinators were thrilled by the magnitude of the district's donation. Most importantly, many local families were able to enjoy a full table this holiday season because of Alfred-Almond's generosity.



Students in Mr. Link's class display their donations to the Student Government drive.

*The Alfred Almond Performing Arts Department  
proudly presents*

# Annie

Thursday, March 9, 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 11, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 12, 2:00 p.m.

in the  
High School Auditorium

Tickets are \$5 General Admission and will be available at the door.

## Lang's work selected for publication in national digest

The *Young American Poetry Digest* accepted Isabella Lang's 2016 Literary Fest haiku poetry entry for its most recent publication. In three lines of 17 syllables, the Japanese haiku herald the natural world. The 17 syllables (or mora) must be written in a 5-7-5 form and, as a rule, include a kigo, or a word that implies a feeling and literal or primary meaning about a season. Isabella's poem may not be about a physical season, but rather on a subjective experience in her world that shares with us her understanding of herself. She honestly projects her life and writes that she is looking for goodness by 'trailing after the light'. There is a positive commentary on a dark world in her work.



The ability to write haiku is considered to be the signature of the educated in Japan. They have the highest respect for the form. Congratulations on this achievement, Isabella!

The *Young American Poetry Digest*, a national schools project, is designed to share our youth's talents with others and to provide a national publishing opportunity for young poets. The *YAP Digest* represents the imaginative efforts of students of all ages from nearly every state in the nation. These are creative works from students who are excited about writing. Join us in celebrating students' creativity. For more information on *Young American Poetry Digest*, go to [www.youngpoets.org](http://www.youngpoets.org).

*My monotone world  
Bliss goes astray I conceal  
Trailing after light*

*-Isabella Lang*



## Boys' soccer team crowned state champions

The 2016 Alfred-Almond boys' soccer team is the most accomplished in the district's history. The team set school records for wins in a season (20), shutouts in a season (18) and goals scored in a season (91). The young men captured their fourth straight Steuben County Division 1 Title, remaining unbeaten in the last 30 league matches. The Eagles captured their second straight Section V Class D1 Championship, defeating the undefeated team from Naples in a remarkable 1-0 title match. They went on to attain their second straight New York State Western Regional Championship, raising the trophy after a convincing 5-0 triumph over Section VI's champion Pine Valley. A-A then seized its first-ever appearance the New York State title match, defeating the undefeated champions from Section IV South Kortright 2 to 0 in the NYS Semifinal. Saving their best for last, and avenging last season's painful loss, these young men



snapped Fort Ann's 64 match unbeaten streak when they toppled the Section II and defending state champion 2-1 in double overtime. The victory gave Alfred-Almond its first-ever soccer state championship. The Eagles finished the season 20-1-2.

## Annual Story Night attracts readers of all ages

More than 150 children, parents and community members attended the Elementary School Improvement Team's annual Story Night in December. Four volunteer readers thrilled their audiences with spirited versions of their favorite tales. Mrs. Olin read *Owl Moon* and Mrs. Burlingame shared pictures and stories about great horned owls living on her property. Mr. Goho read *Bug in a Vacuum* and Mr. Dwyer read *Down the River and Walk on the Wildside*. Mrs. Powers and more than a dozen student participants capped off the evening with a reading and dramatic recreation of *Mr. Willowby's Christmas Tree*. Special thanks to Sashi Racho, Deb Cannon and their families for their efforts in making the Scholastic Book Fair a great success. This event raised more than \$2,000 for our teachers to use in purchasing books for their classrooms.



(Clockwise, from left)  
Mrs. Powers and her students presented Mr. Willowby's Christmas Tree.

Mrs. Olin read *Owl Moon*.

Mr. Dwyer read two stories to students.

Mr. Goho shared *Bug in a Vacuum*.



## First Honor Roll Breakfast recognizes academic achievement

In December, the Secondary School Improvement Team was proud and delighted to host the First Honor Roll Breakfast for the first quarter of the 2016-17 school year. It was standing room only as the High School cafeteria filled with students and families who enjoyed fruit, juice and the ever-popular donuts, along with recognition.

The now traditional ceremony actually topped last year's record attendance. The academic achievements of students were celebrated as Mrs. Bain-Lucey offered them her gratitude and admiration for the importance they have placed on their education, along with their commitment to improve, grow, learn and challenge themselves. She thanked the parents and teachers for their support and encouragement of the students.

One hundred forty-seven First Honor students were recognized by their counselors, comprising 50 percent of the student body. To receive First Honors, a student must obtain an average of 90 percent or higher and have no grade below 80 percent.

Mrs. Bain-Lucey also noted that overall, 195 students achieved either first or second honor status or BOCES honors. This comprised 66 percent of the Alfred-Almond Jr./Sr. High School student body.

Congratulations to all of these students and their teachers and families for their dedication to education!



(Clockwise, from top) Claire Volk, Desirae Raczek and Sidney Wildrick Cole were among the honorees at the First Honor Roll Breakfast.

## Two Girls on the Run programs offered this spring

Two Girls on the Run programs will be offered to Alfred-Almond students this spring. Girls in grades 3-5 will have the opportunity to express their feelings and make new friends while playing games and discussing important topics such as friendship and bullying.

Girls in grades 6-8 are invited to join Heart and Sole for Girls on the Run of the Southern Tier. Participants will learn that worth comes from within, healthy relationships matter and that she can have an impact on the world around her.

At the end of the season, girls at both levels will be emotionally and physically prepared to complete a 5K event.

Practices for both programs will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. The spring season begins the week of March 20. Registration begins January 30 at [www.gotrst.org](http://www.gotrst.org).





## STAR credit information

There have been some changes in how certain homeowners will apply for STAR, and in how they receive their STAR benefit. The STAR Program continues to provide much-needed property tax relief to New York State's homeowners.

New STAR applicants receive a credit in the form of a check directly from New York State instead of receiving a school property tax exemption. The amount of your STAR benefit is the same regardless of how you receive it. New Basic and Enhanced STAR applicants must register with the New York State Tax Department to receive a STAR check. Register any-

time at [www.tax.ny.gov/star](http://www.tax.ny.gov/star). Registration only takes a few minutes. Property owners without access to a computer can register by phone weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 518-457-2036. Register by July 1 to receive your STAR check in September. If you register after July 1, you will receive your check later.

### STAR eligibility requirements

The eligibility criteria are the same for both the STAR credit and the STAR property tax exemption. You can't receive both the credit and the exemption.

- To receive the STAR credit or exemption, you must own your home and it must be your primary residence.
- Basic STAR - The total income of the owners and the owners' spouses who primarily reside at the property must not exceed \$500,000.
- Enhanced STAR - The income limit for Enhanced STAR is annually adjusted for inflation.  
2016 income limit - \$84,550.  
2017 income limit - \$86,000  
All owners must be at least 65 years old (unless the owners are spouses or siblings, in which case at least one owner must be at least 65).

### Current STAR exemption recipients

Current Basic and Enhanced STAR exemption recipients will keep their exemptions as long as they continue to own their current homes. Current recipients of the Enhanced STAR exemption who aren't enrolled in the Income Verification Program must continue to file renewal applications with their local assessors each year.

## Summer readers boost A-A in national ranking

Our very own Summer Reading "Superheroes" improved Alfred-Almond Central School District's ranking from 3975th to 988th place nationwide in the recent Scholastic Online Summer Reading Challenge. The challenge began on June 23 with A-A at the bottom of the challenge. Readers Gianna Giglio and Ben and James Eshelman were the three highest contributors for accessing books and experiencing the benefits of reading during the summer reading challenge.

National participation totaled 214,594,918 minutes. Alfred-Almond students contributed 15,997 minutes of their summer time reading to that figure. Students registered themselves (with parental permission) and added read minutes using secure, privately-generated logins. Other students were able to report their figures directly to the librarian for input. Our top contributors were given prizes and treated to lunch with Mrs. Donius, the school librarian.



(Left to right) Mrs. Olix's class members James Eshelman and Gianna Giglio and Mrs. Burlingame's class member Benjamin Eshelman display their reading awards.

## Math team competes in regional contests

Alfred-Almond's math team membership has grown to include 23 students in grades 7 through 12. This fall, the team competed in three math contests. In October, students participated in the Corning Community College Math Contest. The team placed third for small schools. Members also participated in Corning Community College Math Day, where they attended sessions presented on a variety of math and science careers.

At the annual Nevins Competition held at Alfred University, Alfred-Almond was represented by 16 students ranging from grades 7 to 11. Alfred State invited our math team to participate in the NYSMATYC (the New York State Mathematics Association of Two Year Colleges) competition. A dozen of our team members accepted the challenge. We eagerly anticipate our next competition, the American Math Competition, hosted at Houghton College in February.



Math team members participated in Alfred University's Nevins Math Competition in November.



Mrs. Bensley's pre-calculus students and math team members attended Corning Community College Math Day, where they attended sessions about math-based careers.



At the Corning Community College Math Contest, our top five scorers were (front row) Garrett Burys, Jessica Matteson, Abby Kelly, Lauren Kelly (back row) Morgan Giglio and Kaitlyn Cook. Garret and Kaitlyn tied in scoring.

## Athletes honored at fall sports awards

Back Row: (Boys' Soccer) Ethan Hann - JV Sportsmanship, Jake Johnston - MVP, Matt Ingalls - Sportsmanship, Duncan Allen - Most Improved  
Middle Row: (Girls' Soccer) Celeste Badeau - JV Sportsmanship, Kalista Calkins - Sportsmanship, Mariah Hann - MVP, Jessica Flaitz - Most Improved  
Front Row: (Girls' Tennis) Maeghan Rodd - Most Improved, Katlyn Guild - Sportsmanship, Abby Kelly - MVP





## Elementary students "crack the code"

Fifth- and sixth-grade elementary students are working with sixth-grade teacher Mr. Wargula to learn basic coding skills using the Google Computer Science Curriculum. This after-school program introduced more than 20 eager students to the process of computer programming in hopes of developing a better understanding of and interest in computer science. Students created basic computer programs through the use of Scratch, a coding program developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

The goals of the program are to help students develop leadership skills, foundational computer science skills, persistence in problem solving and knowledge in the logic of coding. Students presented their programs to family and friends at a special session on December 14. The club will resume activities in mid to late January. Interested fifth or sixth graders should see Mr. Wargula for more information.



(Above) Andrew Diestler presents the program he created.

(Right, top) Mr. Wargula welcomes guests who attended for student presentations.

(Right, center) Jack Deutsch shares his work with the audience.

(Right) Greyson Aldridge Gray prepares his presentation.



## Access to eBooks now available at A-A

District libraries and faculty gained access to Overdrive Online eBooks in October. The acquisition of an eBook database is another step by A-A libraries to match student interest in technology and in reading. Overdrive, a database already familiar to the Southern Tier, provides immediate and easy access to popular titles. Ease in access and connectivity encourages a greater interest in reading. Overdrive is currently being used by the area consortium of public libraries and the NY Public Library. Students may instantly connect to both district holdings and to local

public library holdings (if they hold a public library card) using their district login and password. The database allows users to borrow or reserve a title effortlessly.

The purchased titles, which include popular high-demand young adult works, are targeted to seventh through twelfth-grade readers. Titles for younger, beginning readers are available through Tumblebooks.

To access Overdrive, go to <http://aacs.lib.overdrive.com>.

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### *Snow and emergency closing information*

**A**s a reminder to parents, with the winter weather, it is sometimes necessary to close school because it is not safe for the students to walk or ride to school. Should it be necessary to close school, you will receive an automated message notifying you of this occurrence. For additional information on school closings, please listen to one of the following radio or TV stations:

WLEA 1480 AM	WLSV 790 AM
WKPQ 105.3 FM	WCKR 92.1 FM
WJQZ 103.5 FM	WZKZ 101.1 FM
WKBW-TV (Buffalo)	WETM-TV (Elmira)



### *Important dates*

Superintendent's Conference Day – No school for students  
..... January 30

Winter Recess – No School ..... February 20-24

Winter Sports Awards..... March 1, 7:00 p.m.

Spring Musical - “Annie” ..... March 9, 11 and 12

Superintendent's Conference Day – No school for students  
..... March 10

Parent-Teacher Conferences – Elementary students  
dismissed at 11:50 a.m. .... March 16-17

### *School calendar update*

**N**YS Regents begin on June 13. The last day of classes for students grade 7-12 is June 12.

### *Transportation requests info.*

**A**ny parent requesting transportation to a non-public school for the 2017-18 school year must make the request in writing by April 1, 2017. The request should be submitted to the District Office.