



A performance of Shrek Jr. at Taft Elementary

Pg. 13



All-state makes the grade

Pg. 6

# Volunteers answer the call

## Inside the Blooming Grove Volunteer Ambulance Corps

By Giada DeGiglio

BG Post Student Reporter

When a medical emergency strikes in Blooming Grove, help is often closer than many people realize. Behind the sirens and flashing lights is a dedicated group of volunteers who balance school, work, family and personal lives while committing themselves to serving their community through the Blooming Grove Volunteer Ambulance Corps. From experienced leadership to devoted junior members, these volunteers play a critical role in keeping the community safe.

At the center of the corps' operations is Captain John Hastings, who oversees both the daily and long-term needs of the organization. "As an EMT Captain, I manage the volunteer staffing schedule and work to fill any coverage gaps that arise," Hastings revealed. He also supervises the volunteer supervisors, assigns operational tasks and monitors calls to determine if additional support is needed. His role highlights the responsibility and coordination required to keep emergency services running smoothly.

Becoming part of the ambulance corps requires commitment and training. Hastings explained that "...at a minimum, anyone riding on the ambulance must be CPR certified." Members also receive driver training and the chance to earn EMT certification through Orange County EMS Education. Despite these opportunities, volunteer services face difficulties. "One of the biggest challenges is a lack of individuals pursuing careers in EMS, along with limited state and federal funding," Hastings said, adding that recruitment and retention remain ongoing concerns.

Junior members like Matthew Tarace and Emma Milmore represent the future of the corps. Tarace, a junior member working toward becoming a certified EMT, spoke to the Blooming Grove Post about his motivation for this work. "What inspired me to become



**THE NEWEST AMBULANCE** at the BG Ambulance Corps is a 2024 Ford F350. Photo courtesy of BG Ambulance Corps

a volunteer on the ambulance was my passion for helping people. I felt it was the best opportunity for me to make a real difference in my community," reported Tarace. While balancing school and volunteering can be demanding, he credits the experience with improving his time management and ability to stay calm. "One skill I've learned, and still am practicing everyday, is to stay calm in high-pressure situations," he added.

Milmore, a junior recruit, shared how volunteering changed her perspective on Blooming Grove. "Volunteering showed me a side of my community I didn't really notice before," she said, explaining

*Volunteers, pg. 3*



**BREAKING GROUND** for the construction of the BG Ambulance Corps building in 1963. The building was completed and dedicated on May 22, 1966. Photo taken from undated Orange County Post article.

## The BG Post celebrates Greek Heritage Month this March with a visit to the Grill



**OWNER & CHEF CHRISTOS GLOUFTSIOS** in the kitchen of Greek Brothers Grill in Washingtonville.

Photo by Rhea Trapnell

# French fries on the inside

By Rhea Trapnell

BG Post Student Reporter

In the heart of Washingtonville, Greek Brothers Grill keeps things traditional. With blue-and-white decor and the scent of grilled meat in the air, the restaurant offers a taste of typical Greek life - and that includes their unique gyros. At first, some customers were confused when they discovered fries inside of this Mediterranean classic. A Yelp reviewer was shocked: "First of all, I don't know of any Greek people that would put french fries in a gyro." But that's exactly how they do it in northern Greece. In a conversation with the *Blooming Grove Post*, Greek Bros. Grill insider Michelle Aquino shrugged in response to this surprise, expressing how at the restaurant, "We like to keep the whole traditional aspect of it, including the french fries." But as we enter Greek Heritage Month this March, the *BG Post* asks, who is the "we," the faces behind this local business?

Christos Glouftsiος, the founder and chef of the restaurant, began cooking at the age of eight in the

town of Serres in northern Greece. In those formative years, he learned that food is meant to be shared, not just sold, while cooking alongside his family. That belief grew with age, as he refined his skills in Greece and later Germany. When Christos came closer to our neck of the woods at a Greek tavern in New York City, he found love. The Brazilian woman he met there became his wife, and Michelle his stepdaughter. Once they were together, he moved to Brazil. "He's a very adventurous person, so he likes experiencing different cultures," Michelle explained. There, Christos opened three restaurants, called Christos El Grego. He later immigrated to the U.S., bringing his family - and his cooking traditions - to Washingtonville, the very village in which he would go on to establish Greek Brothers Grill. The restaurant's name itself reflects the emphasis on family and community. Although Christos is the one working behind the counter, the "Brothers" in Greek Brothers Grill honors his sibling, who helped get the restaurant started. The two often shop for ingredients together, and their shared love of food inspired the name.

*Greek restaurant, pg. 3*

**IN THIS EDITION OF THE BLOOMING GROVE POST**

**News, Feature Stories**

Blooming Grove Volunteer Ambulance Corps .....	1, 3
Greek Brothers Grill .....	1, 3
All-State Orchestra .....	5
Moffat Mentors .....	6
Book Review and Staff Picks .....	7
Moffat Mad Libs .....	8
Women's History Month .....	9
Loughran Way .....	10
Then and Now: Washingtonville .....	11
Independent Radio WFMU .....	12
Taft Elementary Drama Club presents Shrek Jr. ....	13
Puzzles .....	14
Health Matters .....	15
<b>SPORTS</b> .....	<b>16</b>

# BLOOMING GROVE POST

**STAFF**

Caroline Korba, Editor-in-Chief

Carol McCrossen, Joel Solonche, Associate Editors, Mentors

Jeremy Joseph, Mentor | Mimi Estes, Art & Photo, Production Editor

Giovanni Berchielli, Isabella Briceno, Luke Broge, Emelia DeCarvalho, Giada DeGiglio, Olivia Hanratty, Mia Huber, Caroline Korba, Katie Kornfeld, Javen Raymond, Rhea Trapnell,

*Blooming Grove Post Student Reporters*

Joel Solonche, Sharen Casazza,

*Blooming Grove Post Community Reporters*

**HOW TO REACH US**

**Email:** bloominggrovepost@gmail.com

**Mail:** The Blooming Grove Post, 6 W. Main St., Washingtonville, NY 10992

The Blooming Grove Post is published bi-monthly by the Moffat Library of Washingtonville. Letters and story suggestions welcome. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. All contents, stories and *BG Post* photos are © 2025 Blooming Grove Post

*This project is made possible by generous grants from NYS Assemblyman Brian Maher and NYS Senator James Skoufis*

**FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

# Spring has sprung in the 'Ville!

Like the rest of the Northern Hemisphere leaving the cold of winter, soon the people of Blooming Grove will



**Caroline Korba**

pick up the spirit of spring cleaning – out with the old, in with the new. This season invites us to pause, to clear out what no longer serves us and notice what's blooming. Just like spring asks us to make room at home, this most recent "March/April" edition of the *Blooming Grove Post* creates space for the stories that shape our town. From local service spotlights and a profile of a popular Hudson Valley radio station to history-based heritage highlights, we at the Post pitch spring as a reminder to care for one another and a chance to shine

attention on this multi-faceted community we call our own.

As the days get longer, our town feels a little more awake – sports start up, windows begin to welcome the warmer weather and flowers grow outside. The Blooming Grove Post is proud to present to you some fresh ideas, flavors, jokes and book recommendations. This edition continues our celebration of expression – on the page, on stage and over the airwaves.

On behalf of all the reporters, mentors and editors who made this wonderful issue possible, thank you, readers, for wanting to uncover the stories, people and traditions that give our town its voice; for being part of the community that continues to bloom here. With a copy of the Blooming Grove Post in hand, let us usher in the season of renewal – together.



**POSTCARD OF BROOKS BRIDGE** which was constructed in 1840 to cross Moodna Creek. Courtesy of Moffat Library

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ALL FAITHS' CEMETERY COMMITTEE!**

The Washingtonville All Faiths' Cemetery is in need of volunteers for the Washingtonville Cemetery Committee and invite you to join our team to serve the community and help preserve important village history! Some of the areas we need help with are: operations; fee structuring; support for special events (e.g. Wreaths Across America, Spring and Fall clean-up, Memorial Day activities); and fundraising. Regular meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM at The First Presbyterian Church, 30 Goshen Ave., Washingtonville, NY. If you or someone you know would like to join the Cemetery Committee, please contact us at 845-391-0822. You can also find us on the web at: <https://washingtonvillecemetery.org>.



**LOOKING FOR ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED IN OR SERVING THE RESIDENTS OF BLOOMING GROVE!**

For the benefit of our readers, we are looking to create a list of local non-profit organizations and the services they provide. If you are a member or know of an organization that serves the residents of our area, please send all pertinent information including: full name of organization; contact name, phone, email; services they provide; and any other information to: **[bloominggrovepost@gmail.com](mailto:bloominggrovepost@gmail.com)**. Thank you!



**MEMBERS OF THE BGVAC** pose in front of one of their seven vehicles. Photo courtesy of BG Volunteer Ambulance Corps

## Volunteers

From pg. 1

that seeing people at their most vulnerable has made her more grateful and aware. She also emphasized the importance of teamwork, noting, "You have to communicate, stay focused and trust your team to do their part."

Both junior members assist EMTs and paramedics by preparing equipment, lending their efforts to move patients and provide basic life saving care such as CPR and naloxone administration. Beyond skills and experience,

they describe strong bonds formed within the corps. Tarace stated, "No matter what happens, the bonds that have grown with others are some of the strongest ever."

The Blooming Grove Volunteer Ambulance Corps is built on reliability, teamwork and compassion. Through the leadership of experienced EMTs and the enthusiasm of younger volunteers, the corps continues to answer the call for its community. Their service is a reminder that ordinary people, driven by a desire to help, can make an extraordinary difference.

The Blooming Grove Volunteer Ambulance Corps (BGVAC) was founded in 1959 by members of the Washingtonville Lions Club to address the growing need for organized emergency medical services in the community. Local volunteers came together to provide reliable ambulance care during a time when such services were largely community-run. Over the decades, BGVAC has grown in training and capabilities to keep pace with advances in emergency medicine. Today, it remains a vital, volunteer-based service serving Blooming Grove.

## Greek restaurant

From pg. 1

counter, the "Brothers" in Greek Brothers Grill honors his sibling, who helped get the restaurant started. The two often shop for ingredients together, and their shared love of food inspired the name.

We interviewed Michelle at Greek Bros. Grill, in lieu of Christos because, as she noted – though he was unsure if he spoke enough English – he was busy cooking in the back. Michelle described her stepfather with a smile. "Christos refuses to Americanize things. He wants to share what the real thing is." In his work, it's clear he keeps the flavors and traditions intact, a culture continued in part by using recipes passed down from his mother, sister and aunt. Specifically, Michelle remembers Christos' sister, Stella, teaching her how to make their baklava when the restaurant first opened. At Greek Brothers Grill everything is made fresh in small batches – except the pita, which is bought from a Greek distributor.

After spending two months in Serres herself, Michelle noticed that life there moves at a slower pace. "It's a lot more centered around balance and rest," she said. "They have daily afternoon naps and all that. America is really about being driven. Go, go, go, don't stop." Back in Washingtonville, the restaurant emulates that same Greek mindset, one that is rare on this side of the Atlantic. "We value slowing down for a second, having nice, fresh, homemade meals and taking a break from the outside world for a little bit," she added.



**IN HOMAGE** to the colors of their homeland of Greece, the Glouftsios family adorned their restaurant with blue and white throughout. Photo by Rhea Trapnell

Local support for the grill began before it even opened, when neighbors offered help with paperwork, setup and advice. That support has continued and the restaurant now has a loyal base of regulars. Michelle makes a point of remembering customers' names and faces. She talks about feeling like a part of the community. "I'll see people leaving here and then going into F&J's with food from both places, or going to the Chinese place too. It's nice how we can all coexist very peacefully."

With March being Greek Heritage Month, our own Greek Brothers Grill makes it easy to celebrate. This reporter suggests trying the chicken gyro (don't be surprised when the fries show up inside it!), or the platter for two, if in the mood to sample a bit of everything. As a final reflection upon the community they've joined and helped create, Michelle had this to say: "It's nice that people can share their love for food everywhere." So, the *BG Post* toasts, Γεια μας, yia mas, and to the health of us all!

**MOFFAT LIBRARY EVENTS  
CALENDAR - MARCH-APRIL  
2026  
PROGRAMS**

Please Note: All programs take place at Moffat Library unless otherwise noted. Registration is required for all library programs as space is limited. Please register online at: [moffat.librarycalendar.com](http://moffat.librarycalendar.com)

**PROGRAMS FOR KIDS**

**Learning Lab (For grades K-6)  
Monday, March 16, 23, from 4-6 p.m.  
(30-minute sessions):  
Jr. Scientist Club (For grades K-5  
with an adult)  
Wednesday, April 8, from 5-6 p.m.:**  
Enjoy an afternoon of science and fun with our teen volunteers!

**Pokémon Club (For ages 10-14)  
Friday, March 13, from 3-4 p.m.:**  
Come explore the world of Pokémon through fun, hands-on activities and the Pokémon Trading Card Game! In this friendly, inclusive space, players can build strategy, math, and reading skills while making new friends and sharing their love of Pokémon.

**Books & Babies (for babies 6-23  
months with an adult)  
Thursday, March 19 & April 23, from  
11:30 a.m.-12 p.m.:** Our youngest patrons and their grown-ups are welcome to join us to explore early literacy with songs, stories, & playtime.

**Read Dogs With Paws For A Cause  
(For ages 6+ with an adult)  
Wednesday, March 25 & April 29,  
from 4-5 p.m. (15-minute sessions):**  
Build reading skills and confidence by reading to a calm and comforting dog from READ (Reading Assistance Dogs) through Hudson Valley Paws for a Cause therapy dogs. There will be one dog at each session and 4 appointment slots open.

**Bedtime Storytime (For children of  
all ages with an adult) - NEW!  
Thursday, March 26 from 6:30-7  
p.m.:** Snuggle in for stories read aloud by our teen volunteers. This gentle, end-of-day program helps build early literacy skills and encourages a love of reading. Feel free to come in pajamas and bring a favorite stuffed friend! Need extra help with math, reading, or writing? Sign up for a 30-minute session with a certified elementary school teacher! This program is designed to give students individualized attention in a relaxed, supportive environment.

# Hello



**Jr. Scientists Club (For grades K-5  
with an adult)  
Wednesday, April 8, from 5-6 p.m.:**  
Enjoy an afternoon of science and fun with our teen volunteers!

**Pokémon Club (For ages 10-14)  
Friday, March 13, from 3-4 p.m.:**  
Come explore the world of Pokémon through fun, hands-on activities and the Pokémon Trading Card Game! In this friendly, inclusive space, players can build strategy, math, and reading skills while making new friends and sharing their love of Pokémon.

**Books & Babies (for babies 6-23  
months with an adult)  
Thursday, March 19 & April 23, from  
11:30 a.m.-12 p.m.:** Our youngest patrons and their grown-ups are welcome to join us to explore early literacy with songs, stories, & playtime.

**Read Dogs With Paws For A Cause  
(For ages 6+ with an adult)  
Wednesday, March 25 & April 29,  
from 4-5 p.m. (15-minute sessions):**  
Build reading skills and confidence by reading to a calm and comforting dog from READ (Reading Assistance Dogs) through Hudson Valley Paws for a Cause therapy dogs. There will be one dog at each session and 4 appointment slots open.

**Bedtime Storytime (For children of  
all ages with an adult) - NEW!  
Thursday, March 26 from 6:30-7  
p.m.:** Snuggle in for stories read aloud by our teen volunteers. This gentle, end-of-day program helps build early literacy skills and encourages a love of reading. Feel free to come in pajamas and bring a favorite stuffed friend!

**Saturday, March 28, from 1-2 p.m.:**  
Join us at the Moffat Library for STEM activity, and explore the fundamentals of electronics in a hands-on workshop. We'll be building a fun gadget that each child will get to take home! This interactive session promotes creativity, teamwork and early confidence in STEM.

**PROGRAMS FOR TEENS**

**Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Meeting  
(For ages 13-18)  
Tuesday, April 7, from 4-5 p.m.**  
Moffat Library's Teen Advisory Board's monthly meeting where teens share ideas and help shape how young adults experience the library by figuring out clubs, programs and opportunities for community service. Join today!

**Virtual Tabletop Dungeons & Dragons  
(For ages 10-18)  
Friday, March 20, from 3:30-5:30  
p.m.:** Join us for a single stand-alone Dungeons & Dragons adventure like no other. Guided by professional Dungeon Master Benedict Hudson, you'll embark on a thrilling quest with an interactive game board that responds to your every move! Play with a friend or sign up solo! Strategy, storytelling and surprises await!

**Teen Art Club (For ages 11-18)  
Tuesday, March 27, from 4-5 p.m.:**  
Your creative haven within the library's welcoming space! New projects every meeting with local artist Fable Culhane! If you're a high school or middle school student with a flair for art or a desire to explore your creative side, this club is perfect for you!

**PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS**

**Memoir Writing Workshop (For  
adults)  
Thursday, March 19, from 6-7 p.m.**  
Join HV writer, MJ Hanley-Goff, for this interactive workshop, where participants will brainstorm ideas and writing prompts to craft their own personal essay. Bring a laptop, or pen & paper and get ready to write!

**SHELF LOVE BOOK CLUB (For adults)  
4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month @ 6:30-  
7:30 p.m. - March 23, April 27 - TBA:**  
Moderated by Lara Sibley, this new book club focuses on feel good, romance & heartwarming books.

**Let's Get Moving: Closing the gap for  
adults with developmental/intellectual  
disabilities (For adults)  
Tuesday, March 24, from 6-7 p.m.** Join Ability & Beyond Fitness for an informational session about the limited access to health and fitness activities for those with developmental/intellectual disabilities, the barriers that affect this population, and the importance of exercise & movement. You'll leave with suggested exercise regimens and examples of simple, yet practical activities to improve physical fitness.

**COFFEE SOCIAL CLUB (For seniors)  
Wednesday, March 25, April 29, from  
11 a.m.-12 p.m.** Treat yourself to a hot beverage and a tasty snack while you socialize with your peers. Refreshments.

**WASHINGTONVILLE WRITERS' CIR-  
CLE (For adults)  
Last Saturday of each month @ 11  
am-12:30 p.m. - Meets: March 28,  
April 25:** Share your writing endeavors in a productive and encouraging environment!

# Moffat Mentors

## Inaugurating a new space for innovation

by **Emelia Decarvalho**  
BG Post Student Reporter

The Moffat Library is home to many programs open to the Blooming Grove community – the *Blooming Grove Post* local newspaper, Junior Scientists Club and the Teen Advisory Board, to name a few. These organizations enable the youth of the town to interact with their peers and have a positive impact on those around them. Moffat Library Teen Services Librarian Jeremy Joseph proposed the idea of The Moffat Mentors Initiative as a way “for teens in our community to not only develop library programs, but also to take on leadership-level volunteer opportunities focused on supporting younger students through various educational and literacy programming.”

The initiative was inspired by past community members who created The Junior Scientists Club, with the intent of educating and engaging with youngsters in a meaningful way. Founded by Lila Sinacori and Caroline Korba, the Junior Scientists Club (JSC) is dedicated to planning, testing and running hands-on science experiments in monthly sessions for children ages five through ten, aiming to introduce them to the wonders of scientific study. “The kids always have a good time and their smiles fill the room,” smiled *BG Post* Editor-in-Chief Caroline Korba when speaking on her experience with JSC. Co-founder Lila Sinacori added that “...they really love the experiments and are always very engaged in the process.” Aside from the kids’ enjoyment, the volunteers themselves experience the same sense of pleasure from observing all the ways in which their club has benefitted the youth of the community. In conversation with the *Blooming Grove Post*, the two Moffat Mentors were proud to note both the curiosity and laughter on display at each JSC meeting.

If you’re an aspiring teen with an idea and you’d like to see it become reality, the Moffat Library just might be the place to go for help. The goal of the Moffat Mentors Program is to provide adolescents with a venue through which they may pursue their passions, via interactive clubs with the rest of the community – the same as those previously mentioned. Recently, the Moffat Library has gained a fashion club and an art club, among others. Clubs organized through the Moffat Mentors Program will increase the potential for kids to form connections with one another and to deepen their involvement in a topic they find interesting. All are welcome to join.

Stop by the Moffat Library and speak to Teen Librarian Jeremy Joseph to find out more information on the Moffat Mentor Program!



**ABOVE: TEEN MOFFAT MENTOR** (& *BG Post* Editor-in-Chief) Caroline Korba & Librarian Sam Angarola help to oversee the younger children working on their projects at a recent Junior Scientists Club program at Moffat Library. Photo by Jeremy Joseph

**Left: TEEN MOFFAT MENTORS** help younger children create DNA strands made using candy at a meeting of the Junior Scientists Club. Photo by Jeremy Joseph

# Wizard plays in All-State Orchestra

BY Giovanni Berchielli  
BG Post Student Reporter

I have been lucky enough to be a reporter for the *Blooming Grove Post* for quite some time now, so I was thrilled when I was asked to write about my trip to Rochester to perform with the New York All-State Orchestra.

I started on this journey by dedicating months of practice time towards preparing a French horn solo, which I performed at a competition called NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association) where each musician performs for a judge. After a few hours, the performer receives a score and, depending on the level of difficulty of one's solo and the score itself, one can become eligible for certain honor ensembles across the state. I performed the highest level of solo possible and received a score of 99 out of 100. This score placed me in contention with other players from around the state to get into one of the All-State groups (all referred to as All-State), which are extraordinarily hard to get into. I was selected for the All-State Orchestra.

The experience was amazing! I spent four days in Rochester playing music with the best musicians from around the state. I met new

friends, saw old ones and got to learn from some of the finest music educators from around the world. However, my favorite part was our final performance. We had worked as an ensemble for days, and individually for months, to perfect our two pieces. Although the days leading up to the concert were amazing, they didn't hold a candle to the performance itself. All the All-State group concerts take place in the Eastman Theatre. Eastman is a world-renowned music school in Rochester, which has one of the best theatres in the country. Stepping onto that stage was a moment I'll never forget. Getting the opportunity to play where the world's best musicians have played was magical.

I want to thank my music teachers, for I never would've been where I was without them. We in Blooming Grove are very lucky to have so many excellent music educators in the state teaching our young people; and because of this, I encourage any parents reading this to encourage your child to join the band when the opportunity arises in elementary school. Music is such a wonderful way of expressing yourself, especially for a young person, and you never know what opportunities it might lead to!



THE NYSSMA ORCHESTRA on the stage of the Eastman Theatre. Photo by Gio Berchielli



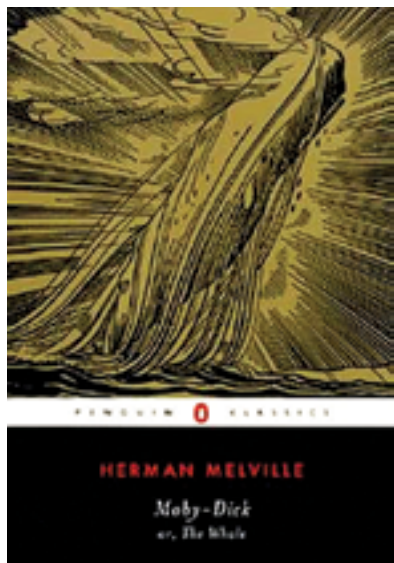
NYSSMA ORCHESTRA above, rehearses at Rochester Airport-Marriot before the concert at the Eastman Theatre. Photo by Gio Berchielli



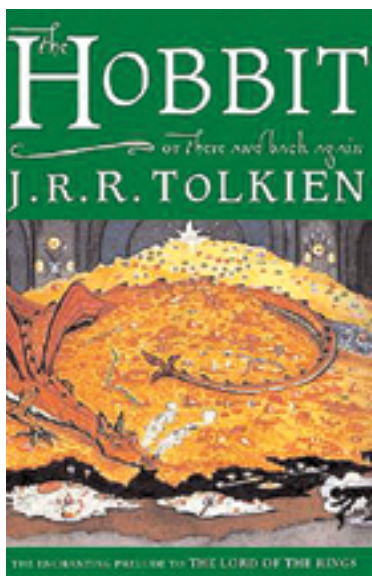
THE NYSSMA ORCHESTRA, right, on the stage of the Eastman Theatre as seen from the balcony. Photo by Tara Berchielli

**MARCH IS NATIONAL READING MONTH**

Thank you for reading the *Blooming Grove Post*. We hope you find our articles interesting, informative and entertaining. Our staff of reporters, editors and mentors invite you to continue your reading. To celebrate National Reading Month (March), we have chosen our favorite books for your consideration, and they're all available from Washingtonville's Moffat Library. Here are our book reviews in three words!



**Moby-Dick; or, The Whale**, the 1851 epic novel by Herman Melville. **Greatest. American. Novel.** Can be found in the Adult Fiction collection - Call #: Mel Joel Solonche, BG Post Associate Editor



**The Hobbit**, a 1937 novel by J. R. R. Tolkien **Dangerous business, adventure** Can be found in the Young Adult Fiction & Adult Fiction collections - Call #: YA Tol & Tol Isabella Briceno, BG Post Student Reporter

**BOOK REVIEW**

In celebration of National Reading Month in March, one of our reporters has written a book review of Ocean Vuong's 2019 novel, "On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous." If you want to check out this book yourself, you can find it in the adult fiction section at Moffat Library.

**Everything good is always somewhere else: A look at "On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous"**

**By Isabella Briceno**  
BG Post Student Reporter

In his 2019 novel, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, author Ocean Vuong does not hesitate to confront some of the most delicate topics of our time. This coming-of-age story explores the search for beauty in a brutal world, healing others without sacrificing ourselves and staying true to who we are despite what we are told. "Everything good is always somewhere else" is one of many memorable quotes which reflect how the narrator, Little Dog, moves through the world longing for things that are just out of reach. Love, safety, and belonging exist in his life, but they are fleeting, always slipping away, and never fully in his grasp.

Written as a letter from a son to his illiterate Vietnamese mother, it is a breathtakingly vulnerable journey of self-discovery and grief, as well as a statement of the impact that trauma leaves across generations. Little Dog writes to tell his mother everything he cannot say aloud. By writing in English, Little Dog chases his mother – a ghost, who has always remained inaccessible and trapped in her own trauma – a world away from her son. He is a boy caught

between American and Vietnamese cultures.

At the core of this novel is Little Dog's first love with a boy named Trevor, a relationship that is tender, destructive and deeply human. Vuong writes about love without romanticizing or veiling it, allowing it to exist parallel to addiction, class struggles and the trauma of war. At

times the writing and the imagery may overwhelm readers, but it is precisely this blunt and transparent narration that makes this novel so powerful.

As Little Dog recounts his tangled life, he reclaims both hardships and joy from his childhood. Vuong's prose fractures and falls into poetry, and then returns to prose. This push and pull – the constant shattering of form – is intentional and a mirror of Little Dog's path. Though fragmented, he is not ruined. Instead, his brokenness becomes his meaning.

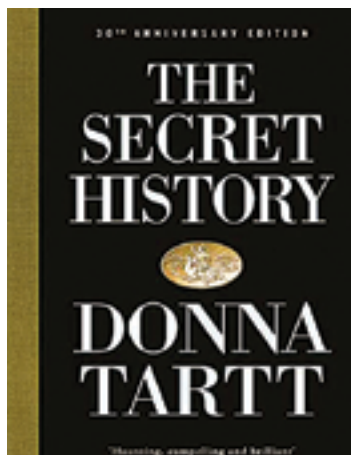
This novel abandons the norms and structures of traditional literature, embracing messiness and beauty the same way love and grief crave chaos. Through this un-

*"Everything good is always somewhere else" is one of many memorable quotes which reflect how the narrator, "Little Dog" moves through the world longing for things that are just out of reach.*

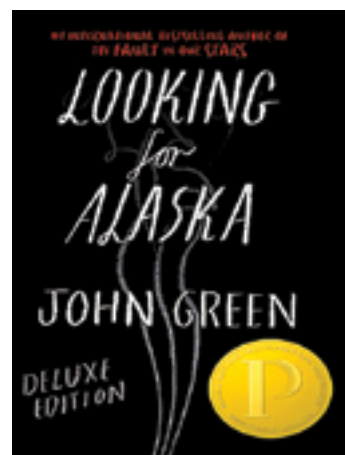
restrained approach, Vuong captures raw and undiluted emotion, leaving the reader in awe long after the final page.



**The Diary of a Young Girl**, a 1947 firsthand account of the Holocaust by Anne Frank **Inspiring, heartbreaking chronicles.** Can be found in the Adult Nonfiction collections - Call #: 940.53 FRA Caroline Korba, BG Post Editor-in-Chief



**The Secret History**, a 1992 novel by Donna Tartt **Rationalization, Forceful, Controlled.** Can be found in the Adult Fiction collections - Call #: Tar Katherine Kornfeld, BG Post Student Reporter



**Looking for Alaska**, a 2005 novel by John Green **Gritty, sincere adolescents.** Can be found in the Young Adult Fiction collections - Call #: YA Gre Luke Broge, BG Post Student Reporter



**Jane Eyre**, an 1847 novel by Charlotte Brontë **Plain Jane Triumphs** Can be found in the Young Adult & Adult Fiction collections - Call #: YA Bro & Bro Carol McCrossen, BG Post Associate Editor

# April is National Poetry & Humor Month

The BG Post celebrates both National Poetry Month and National Humor Month in April with this humorous poem by Joel Solonche, Associate Editor.

## The Therapeutic Value

By Joel Solonche  
BG Post Associate Editor

They say that laughter is the best medicine, which is a nice thought, but I'm pretty sure it won't fix a broken leg, or the economic downturn or that my WiFi keeps cutting out during crucial moments of streaming "A Night at the Opera." April is National Humor Month. Wow, a whole thirty days dedicated to giggling at the absurdity of existence, or maybe just at bad puns about bananas not "peeling" well. My friend, Jeff, thinks he's funny. Whenever we get together, he tries out a new bar joke. You know the kind, the jokes that start, "A priest, a rabbi and a penguin walk into a bar..." Or whatever. Last week it was, "A skeleton walks into a bar and sits down. The bartender asks, "What'll ya have, fella?" He answers, "A beer and a mop." Jeff says it's for his health, lowers his blood pressure, releases endorphins. Sometimes the jokes are funny, like that one. Sometimes not, but I laugh all the same, which is for my health. Anyway, laughter might be good medicine, but it's a terrible pharmacist. It never gives you the right dose. Sometimes you need an actual pill and a good, solid Complaint. And maybe a new router.



Vecezy

## Moffat Mad Libs!

By Katherine Kornfeld  
BG Post Student Reporter

Please join the *Blooming Grove Post* as we celebrate National Humor Month this April with our first Moffat Mad Libs!



One \_\_\_\_\_ afternoon, I \_\_\_\_\_ into the library like I  
(adjective) (action verb, past tense)  
\_\_\_\_\_ the place. The air smelled like \_\_\_\_\_ and unresolved  
(verb, past tense) (plural noun)  
\_\_\_\_\_. A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ librarian with \_\_\_\_\_ eyes screamed,  
(abstract noun) (adjective) (number)  
"NO \_\_\_\_\_ ALLOWED," while aggressively \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(plural noun) (verb-ing) (noun)

I strolled over to the \_\_\_\_\_ section and grabbed a book titled "How To  
(adjective)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Your \_\_\_\_\_ With \_\_\_\_\_." Before I  
(Verb) (Noun) (Plural Noun)  
could open it, \_\_\_\_\_ burst through the \_\_\_\_\_, knocking  
(celebrity) (noun)  
over \_\_\_\_\_ and not-so-nonchalantly whispering, "\_\_\_\_\_!"  
(number) (plural noun) (exclamation)

Everyone in the library immediately began \_\_\_\_\_. Someone \_\_\_\_\_ a  
(verb-ing) (verb, past tense)  
\_\_\_\_\_. Someone else \_\_\_\_\_ emotionally. I performatively read a book  
(noun) (verb, past tense)  
called "How to Be \_\_\_\_\_ in Public Without \_\_\_\_\_" while catching  
(adjective) (verb-ing)  
glimpses of \_\_\_\_\_ and their striking, \_\_\_\_\_.  
(previously named celebrity) (adjective) (animal).

After exactly \_\_\_\_\_ minutes, I left the library feeling \_\_\_\_\_.  
(number) (emotion)

### UPCOMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

#### Town of Blooming Grove

Town Board meets on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 7 pm

Upcoming Board meetings: 3/3, 3/17, 4/21 @ 7 pm

Meetings take place at Blooming Grove Town Hall, 6 Horton Rd., Blooming Grove, NY

For more info & updates: PH: 845-496-5223 | <https://bloominggrove-ny.gov/>

#### Village of South Blooming Grove

Village Board meets on the 2nd & 4th Mondays of the month at 8 pm

Upcoming Board meetings: 3/9, 3/23, 4/13, 4/27 @ 8 pm

Meetings take place at South Blooming Grove Village Hall, 811 Route 208, Monroe, NY

For more info & updates: PH: 845-782-2600 | <https://www.villageofsouthbloominggrove.com/>

#### Village of Washingtonville

Village Board meets on the 1st & 3rd Mondays of the month at 7 pm

Upcoming Board meetings: 3/4, 3/16, 4/6, 4/20 @ 7 pm

Meetings take place at Washingtonville Village Hall, 9 Fairlawn Drive, Washingtonville, NY

For more info & updates: PH: 845-496-3221 | <https://www.washingtonville-ny.gov/>



**YOUNG SINGLE** Irish women dominated domestic service in many American cities in the 1800s.

## A brief history of Irish women in America

By Joel Solonche  
BG Post Associate Editor

**E**llis Island opened on January 1, 1892, and the very first person to be processed through what became the world-famous immigration center was an Irish girl named Annie Moore. Settling in New York, Annie married a young German-American man who worked at the Fulton Fish Market. She bore eleven children, six of whom died before adulthood. She died at age fifty in 1924. She never left New York's Lower East Side, living the rest of her life in a few square blocks. Though Annie would not be remembered if not for being a first, her story nonetheless offers insights into the American experience – precisely because she was so very typical.

The Irish, before and after Annie Moore, had a tremendous impact on American history and culture. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 37 million Americans claim Irish roots. The Irish are the second largest heritage reported by Americans after German. But the Irish were unique among all immigrant groups because in immigrating to the United States, they accomplished something that no other group even attempted.

By the 1890s, single women accounted for 53% of Irish immigrants. They were the only nineteenth or twentieth century immigrant group in which women outnumbered men. Between 1820 and 1860, the Irish constituted over one third of all immigrants to the United States, and by the 1840s – at the height of the Potato Famine – they comprised nearly half. After the crisis of the Famine passed and Irish emigration slowed, Irish women continued to migrate in increasing numbers.

Irish women moved to America for the same reasons as men: opportunity and freedom. Young Irish women and girls left hardscrabble farms where they worked as long and as hard as men to bring in a crop while also maintaining homes and assisting with children. The Potato Famine devastated the Irish economy, and with poor Irish women having few employment opportunities and diminished marriage prospects, they soon set sail for America.

Education was paramount in facilitating Irish-American women's entrance into the workforce. Second generation Irish women entered the professions at higher rates than any other immigrant group, becoming teachers, bookkeepers, typists, journalists, social workers and nurses. By 1910, Irish-American women represented the majority of public elementary school teachers in major cities such as Providence, Boston, New York, Chicago and San Francisco. And by 1939, 70% of Chicago's schoolteachers were Irish-American women. Domestic work provided the first generation's entry point into the American economy. But the second generation turned its back on servitude, preferring the relative autonomy and regular hours found in government and business.

*Irish Women, pg. 13*



**SNAPSHOT** from New York Performing Arts Center's November 23, 2025 production of *The Nutcracker*. Photo courtesy of Cyara Kamp-Clavell and Jackie Planker-Knight

## Dreaming, believing, imagining, achieving women today

### Shining a light on a local women-owned business

By Olivia Hanratty  
BG Post Student Reporter

**W**omen's history is observed nationally throughout the month of March, importantly showcasing strong independent women in the world today. Locally, the village of Washingtonville is home to the New York Performing Arts Center (NYPAC), a business created and run by two women entrepreneurs.

Cyara Kamp-Clavell and Jackie Planker-Knight opened the studio in 2008. Since then, they have become prominent business owners in the village and currently have over six hundred and fifteen students enrolled. While NYPAC offers a wide range of dance classes and other opportunities for students, their studio has also gone on to win overall placements for national titles, earn invitations to dance in Walt Disney World twice (with a planned third trip in 2028) and performed at other venues and events, including at Lincoln Center and Hudson Valley Renegades games. However, such accolades are not the main focus. According to Klamp-Clavell, "Just seeing how our dance studio can impact people's lives for the rest of their life. You know, like from growing up in a dance studio and seeing all the life lessons that they learned, that's what makes me the most proud. We can instill that because that's more important than all the awards."

Kamp-Clavell and Planker-Knight have danced alongside each other their whole lives. Klamp-Clavell's mother owned her own dance studio and assisted both women as they learned the logistics and skills to become entrepreneurs, as well as how to educate others in their chosen field. The pair started teaching at Kamp-Clavell's mother's studio in their teenage years. Kamp-Clavell went on to study business and physical therapy and Planker-Knight studied dance during their college years, which helped prepare them for setting up and coordinating their studio.

While accomplished in their fields, the two dealt

with many challenges along the way. Being two young women opening up their own business, many people questioned and even doubted whether they could handle the pressure of owning a business. In spite of this, they opened their business with the support of the community as a whole, which helped them reach their goal. According to Kamp-Clavell, one of the aspects of NYPAC she is most proud of is "knowing that we completely created this from the ground up and just being able to put our dreams in motion and in actions and just being able to provide special opportunities for the children of Orange County."

The empowerment of women is essential in women's history. Dance has always served as a perfect venue for young women to express themselves and grow into the leaders of tomorrow. Dance encourages young women to have "thicker skin," as Kamp-Clavell notes. She and Planker-Knight receive messages from their alumni frequently. Students who had danced with NYPAC since their early childhood, even up until high school, have reached out to express how they used the lessons they learned being a part of their dance studio to assist them in their adult years. These messages continue to encourage the two women. Reflecting upon their journey and motivation, Kamp-Clavell explained how "from [our] early twenties, just literally building a business from the ground up and starting in a one-room little studio to now having five studios... just really proud of being able to do that." The positive effects these women have had on others as well as how the studio has reflected their own success, showcases the positive impact of this women-led business and the dance field as a whole.

Women-owned businesses are vital for empowering young women. Kamp-Clavell and Planker-Knight's business and their success story is a testament to women's achievements. Enduring obstacles, redefining expectations and making dreams a reality are huge takeaways when studying women's history. Most significantly, women everywhere must remember NYPAC's motto: "Dream, Believe, Imagine, Achieve."

# James Loughran Way

Schoolhouse Road renamed in memory of beloved community member

By Carol McCrossen  
BG Post Associate Editor

This past October, the Town of Blooming Grove renamed Schoolhouse Road in Salisbury Mills to James Loughran Way in honor and in memory of lifelong community member James Loughran, who passed away in January 2025. The idea for the road renaming was brought to the town by Highway Superintendent Wayne Kirkpatrick and the resolution was passed by the Town. A formal dedication ceremony took place on October 24, 2025, with Town Supervisor Robert Jeroloman on hand, along with fellow community members, friends and Loughran family members at the spot where the new James Loughran Way sign was unveiled. A reception followed at the Seniors Center at Lasser Park. It was a joyful event for all and a celebration of the life of James Loughran.

If you don't know, Jim Loughran was a lifelong resident of Salisbury Mills and was well known as the owner of Loughran's Irish Pub & Eatery, a staple in the community that brought people together for good food, laughter and memories. He was also an active member of the Salisbury Mills Fire Company, where he volunteered his time and service. Through his business and his many community contributions, James became a beloved figure in the town. He was a strong supporter of local charities and gave selflessly to help those in need.

"A lot of people may not be aware of this, but Jim donated time and food to anybody in our community that fell on hard times," says Blooming Grove resident and county legislator Kathy Stegenga. "Anybody that needed a job or was dealing with something when they were 17-18 years old, he opened up that restaurant to all



## A LIFELONG COMMUNITY MEMBER

James Loughran owner Loughran's Irish Pub and Eatery was a beloved member of our town. It is only fitting that the road closest to his pub was renamed James Loughran Way in his memory.

of us kids...And he treated everybody like family, whether they came into his establishment once a year or if they were there every single week."

As Stegenga added, "For those that knew him, you would understand that anything that was needed in our community, Jim would always be the first one to offer his help." The James Loughran Way road sign will be a reminder of all that Jim has done for his fellow community members and will allow his legacy to live on for future generations to come.



**BG TOWN SUPERVISOR** Robert Jeroloman, Highway Superintendent Wayne Kirkpatrick, Kathy Stegenga & John Stegenga were on hand for the celebration and dedication of James Loughran Way on October 24, 2025.



**LOUGHRAN FAMILY** members and friends gathered at the reception following the road renaming ceremony in memory of James Loughran.

## LOOKING FOR ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED IN OR SERVING THE RESIDENTS OF BLOOMING GROVE!

For the benefit of our readers, we are looking to create a list of local nonprofit organizations and the services they provide. If you are a member or know of an organization that serves the residents of our area, please send all pertinent information including: full name of organization; contact name, phone, email; services they provide; and any other information to: **bloom-inggrovepost@gmail.com**. Thank you!



A POSTCARD with a photo of The First National Bank of Washingtonville as it appeared ca.1910s following its construction in 1914. Courtesy of Moffat Library

# Then & Now: Washingtonville

The *BG Post* introduces a new series about Washingtonville's history, through photos, with this look at 7 West Main Street as it was in 1967 and as it is now.

By Javen Raymond  
BG Post Student Reporter

Although founded in 1895, Washingtonville has an extensive history that goes back even further than that, to as early as 1731. It is safe to say that it is a village with an extensive and meaningful past. In the 1960s, muscle cars were all the rage, and the hippie movement had a chokehold over the country. Washingtonville was a small, quiet village with a population of around 2,000 people. Farms could be found throughout the area, and the culture was strongly

centered around community.

From what is depicted in this photograph of marchers in the 1967 Memorial Day Parade, it is clear that although Washingtonville has changed, many aspects have remained the same throughout the decades. And although it has gone through several transformations in terms of its occupants, this unique stone building in the midground remains untouched, along with the house-like building situated next to it.

However, since this photo was taken, a traffic light was added to

this intersection, presumably from the growth of population and reliance on automobile transportation in the village that has emerged after this photograph was captured. Additionally, County National Bank – the bank visible in the picture – was eventually

replaced with Chase Bank, which remained until 2019 when the building was put up for lease. For a few years after that, it housed an office for Orange County Transit LLC, a private busing firm. The building is now home to Prizmatica, which calls itself a "decor, art and design marketplace and decorative arts/DIY studio."

The stone building was originally constructed in 1914 at the corner of South Street (Route 208) & West Main Street (Route 94) as the National Bank of Washingtonville and later as the Bank of America. NY architect Irving Webster Smith designed the fieldstone building and local craftsman William Van Duzer Jr. was the builder.

As in the past, Washingtonville is still a village that prioritizes community as one of its core values. The Moffat Library - right across the street from the former bank building - is an example of this by being a central hub downtown where people still gather regularly. As for Main Street, the Memorial Day parade continues to make its way down the road every year, the same as it did in 1967.



IN 1967, A PARADE marched along Washingtonville's Main Street to celebrate Memorial Day. As you can see, this 1967 photo, up against the building as it looks today, shows that it looks relatively unchanged from its original construction over 100 years ago. Photo by Javen Raymond

## Puzzle Answers from pg.14

### SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Y Q M A R C H P H S B S X G I E A R A G  
 B A R G U I D T A H M J J F M A R W P O  
 Q K M A L F C N F P A S T E L S I M R I  
 B Y I Z I X Y Z W G F A S D H T K A I S  
 P X V O D N C A O Z T I O J V E K Y L L  
 I L A C S W E M O L D X D H J B V J L V  
 H D M L U U I O A N S S P R I N G N F N  
 M O O E N X Q V W V F W U M W E R V N A  
 V T K A S G V P Q V T K N T H M C G Y N U  
 H C Z N H R K I T E X L W Y B M M U N U  
 Q X R I I E F O R S L H X V J O B X B U N A H  
 R C E N N E G N K Y L S G J S I L H R E D B C  
 E W E G E N K Y L S G J S I L H R E D B C  
 G G P F P H I O A I C C Z R V L M E A L D E R  
 H K F N M V T Z E Q C X L E W Z L O F P Y  
 P R W I B I N J O I W R Q W E L W O P Y P  
 O Z Z Q Q W A W W T P N Z O W D H S O U E L  
 Z X I I X G L I G Y K N F L O D S M I L  
 P H T T N Y P K X J W Y P E I U A Z S Y  
 M P M N X J G I P V J X M J L U P K W G S

### PETE'S PUZZLER

#### ANSWERS:

1. When I'm 64
2. 50 Ways to Lose Your Lover
3. 2 Tickets to Paradise
4. 1 is the Loneliest Number
5. Edge of 17
6. 8 Days a Week
7. Summer of 69
8. 99 Red Balloons
9. I Can't Drive 55
10. 7 Bridges Road

1	C	A	N				4	A	R	E	N	A			9	S	M	O	12	G	
13	U	T	A				14	L	A	P	D	O	G			15	L	O	B	O	
16	P	A	T				17	T	I	S	M	I	T	H			18	O	M	S	K
19	C	H	I	R	P							20	C	R	A	B		22	A	C	A
23	A	A	V	E				24	P	E	T	E	S	E		26	E	G	E	R	
27	K	L	E	E	N	E	X								29	T	A	L	E	N	T
30	E	T	S					31	D	R	U	I	D			34	A	R	E	S	
								35	P	A	U	L	S	I	M	O	N				
38	P	O	L	O											42	T	B	D			
45	H	O	O	K				47	A	H				48	G	O	D	T	I	E	R
50	P	H	O	E	B	E	S			52	N	O	W			53	R	E	D	S	
54	A	L	P					55	A	L	O	E				56	C	A	D	R	E
57	P	A	S	T				59	P	S	I	L	O	V	E	Y	O	U			
62	E	L	I	S				63	M	A	N	T	I	S			64	E	O	S	
65	R	A	N	K				66	E	D	S	E	L				67	D	M	S	

# A community built across the airwaves

## An inside look at the independent radio station WFMU

By Luke Broge  
BG Post Student Reporter

A t non-profit, listener-supported radio station WFMU, headquartered in Jersey City and transmitting to northern New Jersey, New York City and the Hudson Valley, “the community building aspect of the station ... is as important if not more important than the radio programming,” at least, according to station manager Ken Freedman.

Freedman found his home in the radio community early on, working at a radio station at his high school in Highland Park, New Jersey and as a student at The University of Michigan. It was while hosting a late-night radio show in college that he caught the attention of listeners. His freeform show reminded them of WFMU, a station the audience knew from home. This led Freedman to listen to cassette tapes of the station’s broadcasts and he fell in love. Equipped with a degree in English, he moved home to the New York area, and started at WFMU. After about a year and a half, he applied for the job of station manager – a role he’s faithfully held ever since.

The station itself is one of many independent, community-supported radio stations in the country. It is financed mainly by listeners through annual fundraisers; and subsequently, the station has no advertisements, a process called underwriting in the public broadcasting space. Freedman believes that not having to answer to advertisers or external institutions is a privilege. Speaking about himself and the station, he told the *Blooming Grove Post* that “we’re really free to go our own way as long as we take care of our audience and our listeners.”

One means by which the station raises money is through events at Monty Hall, its live venue in Jersey City, and more specifically, through its biggest event, the WFMU Record Fair. Held in Manhattan every November, this fair serves not only as a fundraiser, but as a chance for the thousands of people in the station’s community to gather.

Most importantly, WFMU stands out from the pack of radio stations because of its distinctive array of volunteer DJs and show hosts, as well as the circle of devoted listeners built around them. Hosting for the station is unique because they control everything, even down to the way they play music – and it’s all broadcast live out on the airwaves (or internet at [wfmufm.org](http://wfmufm.org)). Whatever happens – whether it’s a miscued record or a power outage, the show hosts handle it all live in the studio, talking to the audience as they go. And all of it is recorded. If you miss the show live, you can listen to the archive via their website or app. Every show from the last 25+ years is available.

While many DJs bring laptops and play music digitally, there are many analog methods in use at the station, from vinyl to cassette tapes to CDs. This makes each show unique. For example, “a DJ who’s playing a lot of vinyl [means that listeners] can hear the surface noise and people get really happy about that. They say, ‘I love the surface noise,’” says Freedman. There is also a level of competition among DJs to play music “that not only nobody else in the world is playing, but nobody else on WFMU is playing,” he adds. The station keeps a schedule of shows on its website, and



**A LIVE SESSION** with Yo La Tengo at WFMU studios with DJ Gaylord Fields.

the shows on air can rotate twice yearly to provide new opportunities. The radio broadcast offerings are diverse, from the classical music show *Why Do We Only Listen to Dead People?* on Sunday nights to freeform shows like Fabio’s long-running *Strength Through Failure* program on Thursday afternoons to Freedman’s own *Seven Second Delay* comedy “stunt” show with Andy Breckman (writer for SNL & David Letterman and tv series “Monk”) on Wednesday nights.

Notably, listeners can connect to each other and the DJ directly via live chat. The station has created a robust chat platform that engages listeners twenty-four hours a day. For DJs, this is like having a live audience to respond to in a way that is even more efficient than calling in. Another benefit from these comments – sometimes 700 to 800 for a single radio show – is that “listeners are really, really knowledgeable and creative. So they’re always adding new things to the program through the chat,” Freedman said.

The community built around WFMU has only grown as people turn to podcasts, playlists and other media instead of radio. These forms tend to lack the connection of radio. Podcasting, for example, has “become a forum for podcasters to talk to each other ... and they’re not necessarily talking to the audience,” said Ken Freedman. Nevertheless, as station manager and program director at WFMU, he will continue creating a space that actually allows this unique, authentic connection with listeners. If you’re interested in tuning in yourself, the station is available at 90.1 FM in the Hudson Valley and can be found online at [wfmufm.org](http://wfmufm.org).



**WFMU STATION MANAGER** and DJ Ken Freedman with co-host Andy Breckman broadcasting their show, *Seven Second Delay*, live on Wednesday evenings from 6-7 p.m.

# Drama Club showcases young talents in Shrek Jr.

By Olivia Hanratty

BG Post Student Reporter

**T**aft Elementary School's cast of fourth- and fifth- graders took the stage from Wednesday, Nov. 19 to Friday, Nov. 21, 2025, in their production of *Shrek Jr the Musical*. Students were tasked with executing the show in less than two months. Meeting after school on select days during the months preceding the performance, the students devised choreography, rehearsed lines and songs and experienced how a show is truly put together.

A cast of 110 children participated, forming a full ensemble of dancers, singers and actors. Memorable songs and dance numbers included "Freak Flag," "Big Bright Beautiful World," "What Up, Duloc?" along with many more. *Shrek Jr. the Musical* overflows with humorous and heartfelt moments, which, to the delight of their audience, the Taft students brought to life on stage. Behind the scenes, students worked together, whether it be in the cast or crew. The running crew and set design crew learned important lessons like how to follow instructions, how to create sets, and they acquired skills of attentiveness and gained experience at a young age, all of which led to the cohesiveness of the show.

Through producing and performing, the children made memories they would never forget. As fourth-grader and cast member Seraphina Hanratty told the *Blooming Grove Post*, "I learned a lot about teamwork and how it's all about working with everyone else and not just being on your own. The experience also taught me about putting in the hard work and not just putting in a little effort, so I think I really learned a lot." The show was directed by Elena Copeland, a music teacher at Taft who has now directed four of the school's



**SHREK JR. CAST** performing on stage on the night of their second show this past November at Taft Elementary School. Photo by Olivia Hanratty

plays. "What motivated me is seeing the way students can really shine on stage and develop their confidence as young performers! For many students this is their first ever stage performance, and I love watching them fall in love with performing!" Copeland exclaimed to the *Post*.

The show's three performances were attended by supporting family, friends and

community members. Through help from director Copeland, assisting volunteer Taft employees, high school student volunteers and the hard work by the cast and crew, the show came together nicely, bringing positive experiences to one and all. Director Copeland expressed great satisfaction with the show, noting "I am most proud of the way that everyone worked together and ded-

icated themselves to learning their lines, songs and choreography in such a short amount of time. The students at Taft are truly one of a kind!" If you got the chance to see them in action, you were lucky. The entire Washingtonville community is proud of these special students at Taft Elementary School, and we look forward to what their next production might bring.

## Local musicals take the stage this Spring

Hey, Wizards! Looking to catch a good show, a local performance of a classic, or an activity to brighten your day? Well, *BG Post* Student Reporter Luke Broge has compiled a list of nearby spring musicals for you to go see! Listed below, please find the participating schools, production titles and dates and showtimes. Enjoy!

**Washingtonville High School -**  
Legally Blonde: The Musical  
March 5-7: 7 p.m.

**Warwick Valley High School -**  
Les Miserables  
March 12: Senior Citizens performance  
4 p.m. March 13-14: 7 p.m.  
March 14: 1 p.m.

**Minisink Valley High School -**  
Monty Python's Spamalot  
March 19: 4 p.m. March 20-21: 7 pm  
March 21: 1 p.m.

**Monroe Woodbury High School -**  
The SpongeBob Musical  
March 19: Senior Citizen Event  
March 20-21: 7 p.m. March 21: 12 p.m.

**Goshen High School -**  
Monty Python's Spamalot  
March 20-21: 7 p.m. March 22: 1 p.m.

**Middletown High School -**  
Into The Woods  
March 20-21: 6:30 p.m.  
March 21: 1 p.m.

**Valley Central High School -**  
Newsies  
March 20-21: 7 p.m. March 21-22: 2 p.m.

**Cornwall Central High School -**  
Once Upon A Mattress  
April 3-5: 7 p.m. April 6: 2 p.m.

**Beacon High School -**  
Jekyll and Hyde  
April 24-25: 7 p.m. April 26: 2 p.m.

## Irish women in America

From pg. 9

Once in the workplace, Irish women demanded justice and equality. The second generation protested obvious discrimination. They were among the first to organize and join labor unions. Though they were underrepresented among manufacturing workers, Irish-American women were overrepresented among union leadership. Moreover, they introduced unions to service and professional fields. They organized teachers' unions in order to eliminate male and female pay discrepancy.

Irish-American women also made their mark through literature and journalism. Advanced education produced a generation of literary women, many of whom became professional journalists and novelists. Their subject matter often addressed women's social inequities. Crusading journalist Elizabeth Cochrane, known by the pen name Nellie Bly, revealed abuse of the mentally ill in her newspaper exposé "Ten Days in a Mad House." Kate Chopin's

classic novel *The Awakening* criticized the stultifying confines of traditional American womanhood. Margaret Culkin Banning wrote over 400 articles for the leading women's magazines of the day addressing taboo subjects like body image, alcoholism and the difficulties of marriage.

Living and working in the United States offered Irish women opportunities for freedom and self-sufficiency lacking in the more patriarchal structure of "home." Once in America, they firmly established themselves as a force to reckon with. Their strong networks, formed by immigration patterns and sustained by shared membership in the Catholic Church, nurtured a culture and pride among Irish-American women that continues to this day. During March, which is both Women's History Month and Irish-American Heritage Month, let's toast the strong and determined Irish women who became Americans.

# Pete's puzzlers

Pete the Postman has a new set of puzzlers. For this issue, he's presenting Song Titles that contain a number!

1. W. I. 64 \_\_\_\_\_
2. 50 W. to L. your L. \_\_\_\_\_
3. 2 T. to P. \_\_\_\_\_
4. 1 is the L.N. \_\_\_\_\_
5. E. of 17 \_\_\_\_\_
6. 8 D. a W. \_\_\_\_\_
7. S. of 69 \_\_\_\_\_
8. 99 R.B. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I. C.D. 55 \_\_\_\_\_
10. 7 B.R. \_\_\_\_\_

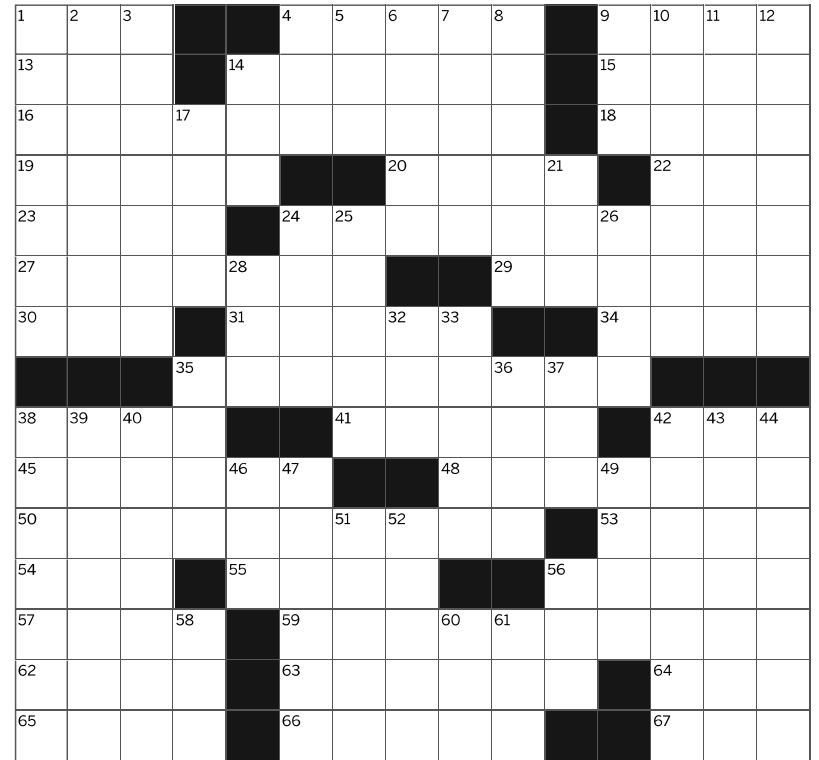
## L. A. Times, Wed, Feb 25, 2026

By Brian Callahan / Ed. Patti Varol  
© 2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC

### ACROSS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Campbell's container                                  | 50 "Poetry Man" singer-songwriter  |
| 4 Sports complex  | 53 Wine category   |
| 9 Air quality factor                                    | 54 Jungfrau, for one   |
| 13 The Jazz, on scoreboards                             | 55 Balm-yielding succulent   |
| 14 Cuddly pooch   | 56 Small but powerful group  |
| 15 University of New Mexico athlete                     | 57 History   |
| 16 "Because the Night" singer-songwriter                | 59 Beatles hit on "Please Please Me," which could be dedicated to 16-, 24-, 35-, and 50-Across |
| 18 Siberian city  | 62 Yale students   |
| 19 Twitter  | 63 "Praying" insect  |
| 20 Grumpy person  | 64 Dawn goddess  |
| 22 Fed. health law                                      | 65 ___ and file  |
| 23 Dialect in some Black communities, for short         | 66 Short-lived Ford model  |
| 24 "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" singer-songwriter | 67 Private chats on soc. media   |
| 27 Tear sheet?  |  |
| 29 Flair  |  |
| 30 "Mars Attacks!" creatures, in brief                  | 41 Treat baked in a fluted liner   |
| 31 Celtic priest of old                                 | 2 No longer moving   |
| 34 Son of Zeus  | 3 Longtime residents   |
| 35 "You Can Call Me Al" singer-songwriter               | 4 Some Energizers  |
| 38 Ralph Lauren brand                                   | 5 Turntable meas.  |
| 41 Buff   | 6 Order  |
| 42 Sked abbr.   | 7 ___-Dame de Paris  |
| 45 Device for smoking shisha                            | 8 Shocked  |
| 48 On an elite level, informally                        | 9 ___-mo replay  |
|   | 10 Certain representative for a child actor, casually  |

### DOWN



- |  |                                     |                                 |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 11 More than indecent                    | 33 Down Under canine                | 44 "The Lorax" creator          |
| 12 Kids' racers                          | 35 Jab                              | 46 Legal org.                   |
| 14 Sass                                  | 36 ___ Mix cat food                 | 47 "I could use a hand"         |
| 17 Cherry or lime                        | 37 "That's strange"                 | 49 Four-time NBA All-Star Young |
| 21 Arthur in the Television Hall of Fame | 38 Element of a basic reading test? | 51 "Deeply unfortunate"         |
| 24 Lima's country                        | 39 "How swanky!"                    | 52 Düsseldorf denials           |
| 25 Jump for joy                          | 40 Keeps updated                    | 56 Walgreens rival              |
| 26 Flair                                 | 42 Like much Grateful Dead merch    | 58 Disappointed cluck           |
| 28 Secret-protecting doc                 | 43 Double space?                    | 60 Cell service letters         |
| 32 Late start?                           |                                     | 61 Part of EVOO                 |

## SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Q M A R C H P H S B S X G I E A R A G  
 A R G U I D T A H M J J F M A R W P O  
 K M A L F C N F P A S T E L S I M R I  
 Y I Z I X Y Z W G R A S D H T K A I S  
 X V O D N C A O Z T I O J V E K Y L L  
 L A C S W B M O L D X L H J R V J L V  
 D M L U U I O A N S S P R I N G N F N  
 O O E N X Q V W V F W U M W E R V N A  
 T K A S G V P Q V T K N T H M C G Y N  
 C Z N H R K I T E X L W Y B M M U N U  
 X R I I E F O R S L H X V J B X B N A  
 C E N N E G W B W H C E P E Q S Y U H  
 W E G E N N K Y L S G J S L H R D B C  
 G P F P H I O A I C C Z R L M E A D E  
 K F N M V T Z E Q C X L E Y E W L F R  
 R W I B I N J O I W R Q W Z L O P Y P  
 Z Z Q Q W A W W T P N Z O W D H O U E  
 X I I X G L I G Y K N F L O D S M I L  
 H T T N Y P K X J W Y P F I U A Z S Y  
 P M N X J G I P V J X M J L P K W G S

## SPRING HAS SPRUNG WORD SEARCH:

Find these blooming words of the coming spring!

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>RAINBOW</b>     | <b>FLOWERS</b>  |
| <b>PUDDLE</b>      | <b>MARCH</b>    |
| <b>LEPRECHAUN</b>  | <b>APRIL</b>    |
| <b>EASTER</b>      | <b>CLEANING</b> |
| <b>APRIL FOOL</b>  | <b>SHOWERS</b>  |
| <b>PLANTING</b>    | <b>SUNSHINE</b> |
| <b>SPRING</b>      | <b>PASTELS</b>  |
| <b>GREEN</b>       | <b>LADYBUG</b>  |
| <b>BUNNY</b>       | <b>KITE</b>     |
| <b>JELLY BEANS</b> |                 |

Stuck? Find the answers to these puzzles on pg. 11



Borden's Dairy in Washingtonville. Drawing by E.J. McLaughlin

# Bone health is important throughout life

By **Sharen Casazza MD, FAAP**  
(Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics)  
*BG Post* Community Reporter



**T**he health of your bones is important for adults and children alike. Bones are the support of your body structure and movement and they protect your internal organs from damage. In addition, bones provide marrow as a factory for red cells, white cells, platelets and stem cells. Bones also supply essential minerals for muscle and nerve function. Calcium and phosphate that make up bones are so important for functions of the body that if intake of these minerals does not provide

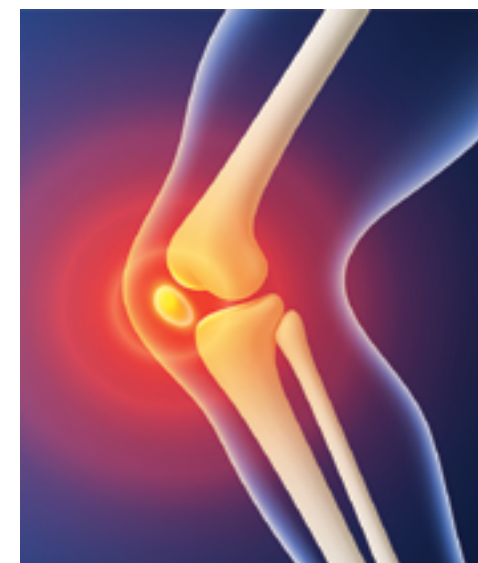
an adequate supply, your body, without hesitation, will take calcium and phosphate out of your bones in order to have enough in your blood. Vitamin D is needed to absorb calcium from foods and supplements.

Bones are so important that you most likely can recall advice about the health of your bones before you even become pregnant until you're ready to pass on. It's one of the reasons for prenatal vitamins, Vitamin D supplementation for breastfed babies, infant formulas, milk intake for children and healthy diets and exercises for adults. Most children do not get enough calcium, phosphate and vitamin D in their diets, especially in the teen years when strong bones are needed for increased athletic activities. Think about dietary sources as you grocery shop. Essential foods include: dairy, leafy greens, fatty fish like salmon and tuna, tofu, nuts, eggs, mushrooms and fortified orange juice and butter.

Risks for poor bone health include some medications like steroids, seizure medicines

and chemo. Cancer, kidney disease, thyroid disease and diabetes also can lead to weaker bones. Diseases that cause significant inactivity like cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy can also lead to poor bone development and maintenance. Paying attention to bones is so important in childhood for one reason - because your best bone density is established in childhood and continues to increase until approximately age 30. You want to establish a brisk bone density to last the rest of your life. After age 30, your bone density gradually declines. By the time young adults start to care about their calcium and vitamin D intake, the time to establish the best bone density has passed them by. Good bone health helps to avoid fractures and osteoporosis.

Maintaining bone health in adults involves a diet rich in calcium, vitamin D and phosphate and weight-bearing exercises and muscle strengthening. It also helps to limit alcohol and stop smoking. Adults need a total of 1200 mg of calcium per day split into two



doses (ex: 600mg in a.m. + 600 mg in p.m.) and 1000 IU of vitamin D daily. Children up to age 3 need 800 mg of calcium, ages 4-8 need 1000 mg and ages 9-18 need 1300 mg per day. These minerals are better absorbed from food, but supplements are sometimes needed to help.



**PEOPLE** who suffer from asthma may use an inhaler or other medications prescribed by their doctor.

## Springing into asthma avoidance

By **Mia Huber**  
BG Post Student Reporter

**S**pring is a time of sunshine and blooming flowers, the time when the school year begins drawing to a close and we taste the sweet summer months ahead. But with these blossoms comes pollen; and with this pollen (and other allergens) comes allergies, and in turn runny noses, itchy eyes and scratchy throats. In preparation for this beautiful season, the *BG Post* would like to share some tips to help you welcome spring - sneeze-free and asthma-free.

In simple terms, asthma is a chronic lung condition that inflames and narrows your airways, typically causing those afflicted to experience difficulty breathing, wheezing, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath. Such symptoms can be triggered by an increase in allergens - particularly during spring. Some common environmental triggers are pollen, smoke, pollution, cold air and pet dandruff, but specific causes vary from person to person.

There are a number of variables that experts believe increase your chances of developing asthma. Pre-existing traits can play a role, as can lifestyle components or environmental factors.

Due to increased pollen from trees, grass

and weeds, it can sometimes be difficult for asthmatics to be outside or breathe in general during the spring months due to seasonal allergies. Changing weather and rain patterns can also irritate the airways, issues often attributed to fluctuating humidity and other circumstances with the propensity to induce complications. Nevertheless, asthma - although annoying to deal with - can be managed. If you have asthma, the most important thing you can do is to make sure you follow your asthma action plan from your doctor, especially if you've been prescribed asthma or allergy medication. If applicable, have your inhaler on you at all times, especially if you plan to exercise or go outside, where there will be pollen. Also, for excursions such as visiting a friend who has one or more furry friends in their home, these treatments will be handy.

Asthma is an ailment that globally affects millions of people of all ages, with the United States population alone boasting over twenty-five million people diagnosed with the disease. Take a proactive approach and try to prepare before you head outside this spring. In so doing, we hope you have a sneeze-free and asthma-safe spring this year!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**, please visit:  
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/asthma/symptoms-causes/syc-20369653>.



## Daylight saving time: Seasonal daylight loss and teen mental health

By **Isabella Briceno**  
BG Post Student Reporter

**D**aylight saving time is the advancement of clocks in the United States in late spring so that darkness falls later, by clock time, during the summer. It was initially implemented in 1918, during World War I, to conserve fuel and power used at night and to extend the workday. It was repealed once World War I was over, then enacted and repealed again soon after. The daylight saving time regulations we are familiar with today were enacted in 1966 with the Uniform Time Act.

According to an October 2025 AP-NORC poll, "Only 12% of U.S. adults favor the current system of daylight saving time... while 47% are opposed and 40% are neutral." There are many reasons that people are unsupportive of the time changes. Studies have shown that changing clocks disrupts sleep schedules, causing exhaustion, fatigue, increased risk of heart attack, darker mornings, safety concerns and negative effects on mental health. These effects are not felt evenly across the population. Evidence has shown that children and adolescents are usually among the most impacted.

During the winter, people typically wake up for work or school in darkness, spend all day inside, and go home in darkness. This is especially true for kids involved in after-school activities and sports that remain indoors from approximately 7 a.m., when school starts, to about 5 p.m. when sports let

out. This means that kids are arriving and leaving school and activities in darkness and, therefore, do not get to soak in much daylight for months at a time. This constant underexposure to sunlight causes deficiencies in vitamin D, which could have adverse effects.

Many kids frequently experience symptoms of depression and fatigue, and may even notice declines in cognitive function during the winter. But why is that? According to a review of pediatric research published in *Nutrients*, many studies have linked low vitamin D levels to mental health challenges in adolescents, including increased depressive symptoms.

When asked about mental health levels in the spring and summertime compared to fall and winter, Washingtonville High School student Madison Bruno responded, "I feel a lot happier in the summer months compared to the winter. I spend so much more time outside each day [in the summer]." This answer is no surprise - Madison's experience reflects findings in recent research. Though not proven, the high association between vitamin D deficiencies and mental health, cognitive function and immune health suggests that a seasonal decline in sunlight exposure could pose risks to young people in America. Daylight saving time may exacerbate this issue by changing when and how often students get daylight exposure.

For more information on this topic, visit the National Institutes of Health website at: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7954020/>

# Athletes in action

By **Caroline Korba**  
BG Post Editor-in-Chief

Hey, Wizards!

As we begin the annual transition from winter to spring sports this March, *The Blooming Grove Post* would like to share with you some recent accomplishments from our local athletes.

The Washingtonville E-Sports Team just attended the Empire State Championships this past winter at Syracuse University, where multiple Wizards competed in various high-level online videogames.

- The Boys Varsity Swim Team has had multiple section qualifiers over the course of the season.

- Both Boys and Girls Varsity Basketball teams have been strong competitors this year, with their records standing at 8-4-0 and 3-7-0 respectively at the time of writing.

- With championship season becoming the focus of our Wizards, this reporter would like to highlight the Boys and Girls Varsity Indoor Track teams, which have traveled to many meets over the past few weeks, including for Yale University's Bulldog Classic. Most recently, they had their Divisional Championships meet at West Point, with the highest-placing throwers and throwers being:

#### BOYS:

- Hugue Zulme in Shot Put (second place)
- Ivan Cuadrado in Weight Throw (fourth place) (46.59)

Congratulations to all of our Wizards as they finish off their seasons. If you or your children are interested in participating in spring athletics, we have compiled below important dates for you to note. Furthermore, if you're interested in contacting a coach, their team, competition level and email are listed under the "Coaching Contact & Athletic Placement Process" tab of the "Quick Links" section of the WCSD athletics website.

#### 2026 REGISTRATION WINDOWS

JV/Varsity: February 9th - February 26th

Modified: February 16th - March 6th

#### 2026 START DATES

JV/Varsity: March 9th

Modified: March 16th

- Kenixander Vermenton in High Jump (second place) and Triple Jump (fourth place)
- Christian Justafort in Triple Jump (fifth place)

#### GIRLS:

- Sanaa Thompson in Shot Put (second place)
- Alanis Castro in Shot Put (fifth place)
- Caitlin Butcher in Weight Throw (fourth place)
- Camryn Flynn in High Jump (second place) and Triple Jump (second place)
- Avery Flynn in High Jump (third place) and Triple Jump (fourth place)
- Madison Nicholas in Long Jump (sixth place)
- The BG Post also wishes to recognize two impressive Wizard alumni, who are rewriting the collegiate record books at their schools.
- Alexis Jones (WHS '25) in the Women's Indoor Mile at Howard University (4:49.16)
- Elijah Mallard (WHS '22) in the Men's Indoor 400M Dash at Syracuse University



**FORMER WASHINGTONVILLE** Wizards Alexis Jones (WHS '25) above, and Elijah Mallard (WHS '22) below, continue to work their magic on the track, each setting records at their NCAA Division 1 universities as they go.

