#### From the President

What a year! 2020 challenged us in so many ways. Our families lost loved ones, dear friends, and former classmates at a rate rarely seen in modern times. Our schools and communities had to overcome almost insurmountable obstacles to prepare our most valuable resource, our children, for what we hope will be a better world. It seems as if all our institutions are under some type of stress.

And yet, even in times of crises, there are still sources of inspiration that we, as alumni and friends of Ticonderoga Schools can celebrate and take pride in. It is these "examples of excellence" that you will find in this year's Alumni Connection.

I'll start with the continued success of our Alumni Award Scholarship Program. Although our donations were slightly down this year, very understandable in a year of devastating economic upheaval, we actually had an increase in the number of donors and were able reach a milestone in the program. For the first time, we were able to make grants of \$1000 to students and no applicant received less than \$750. Once again, we were able to finance our program with individual donations and did not have to make withdrawals from our trust funds, which continue to grow.

We were also able to secure a grant of \$2000 from Glenn and Carol Pearsall Adirondack Foundation to expand our Sentinel Support Fund which provides matching grants to teachers and students for educational projects. The Pearsall Grant helped us recoup some of the losses we incurred due to the cancellation of last year's Alumni Golf Tournament.

Of course, everyone wants to know the status of the Alumni Extravaganza. You will find a more detailed note from our wonderful Alumni Extravaganza cochairs, Karla Vigliotti and Bob Derick, but our Board is committed to doing everything possible to hold a safe and fun event this summer.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our Newsletter team of Joyce Cooper, Alex Blanchard, and Lindsay Mydlarz, with a special thanks to Laura Wright for updating our mailing list.

It's great to be a Sentinel.

-Steve Boyce, President Ticonderoga Alumni Association

## The Key Club Roundup

This school year, Ticonderoga Jr./Sr. Key Club has continued to serve our home, school, and community. Working through the challenges of a hybrid learning environment, THS Key Clubbers have innovated new ways to help the ones we care about. Unlike most years, we are unable to have our Snack Shack under the Friday Night Lights, or our semi-annual Red Cross Blood Drives hosted in the

Gymnasium. Instead, we made homemade holiday cards for our local Senior Care Facilities, and hosted virtual fundraisers for internationally recognized organizations that partner with Key Club International. Many of our members have engaged in service projects on their mobile devices; collecting money while walking, or helping



and Eliza Strum '24 will be taking over for the upcoming 2021-2022 service year.

Being the first year of a Junior-Senior High School, Key Club has opened our doors to over 25 members, grades 7-12. Moving forward, we hope to participate in more hands-on service, as safety and

health protocols allow. Kev Clubbers certainly do miss our brand new Snack Shack on Sentinel Field which was installed during the summer of 2019. While handing out Blow-Pops and Pizza has been put on hold, we cannot wait to return to cheering on our Sentinels. In the meantime, we will continue to serve our community as best we can, whether it be at home

community for their continued support, and we hope to return the favor as soon as it is deemed safe to do so.

that delivers holiday spirit to children in developing nations. others by answering simple trivia questions. In the past two years, Ticonderoga Key Club has produced two Lieutenant Governors serving on the New York District Board for Key Club International. Chloe Baker '22 was the Lt. Governor during

the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 terms,

Key Club Members partnered with the Life Skills class in 2019 packing

holiday boxes in 2019 for Operation Christmas Child, an organization

or in person. Ticonderoga Key Club sincerely thanks our local

> -Chloe Baker THS Class of 2022

# COVID Through the Eyes of Students and Staff

# Focus on what you can do, not what you can't do

Sarah Ellsworth School Counselor, Ticonderoga Junior Senior High School

It is so easy to dwell on what is wrong, what we lost, what we dislike, and why things are frustrating. How often did you hear how terrible 2020 was? How miserable masks are? How irritating this whole situation is? It's easy to get pulled into the negativity and pessimism.

However. it's unhealthy and unproductive to stay in a negative space for too long. We all need moments to vent and air our frustrations. Then it's time to accept reality and focus on the solution. My mantra during the spring of 2020 was the following: focus on what you can do, not what you can't do. This approach, however, meant changing pretty much everything about how I did my job as a school counselor. Every stakeholder in our district had to make drastic changes to adjust to the COVID-19 era. No one could continue doing their job as they had done it in the past, students and parents included. This school year is no different. We are shifting and pivoting all the time to adapt to whatever new regulations, expectations, or needs arise.

This type of change--drastic and continuous--is exhausting. Constantly having to adapt and change is stressful. Long term, chronic stress is unhealthy. A social-emotional learning team was formed in the summer of 2020 to help address these unsavory COVID-19 side effects. In the Junior-Senior High, we are focusing our efforts on teaching wellness and self-care this year. I'm concerned about the poor self-care habits that many students have developed since last March. Things like increased screen time, unhealthy sleep patterns, poor management, and sedentary behavior are affecting our student's overall wellbeing and consequently their academic performance.

All this being said, I stand by my mantra from last spring: focus on what you can do, not what you can't do. Recently, Mr. Sutphen rolled out an open gym schedule for basketball. It might not look like basketball from a year or two ago, but it's what we have and it's a huge victory. I've seen an excitement in students this week that I haven't seen all winter because of this open gym option. Our kids need fun, socialization, and activity (all COVID friendly of course). We have to keep thinking about what we can do with the hand that we have been dealt. want our kids to love coming to school again. I want them to feel hopeful and energized. want them to reach out for help if they aren't doing well. I want the same for my colleagues.

## Interview with a 6th grader by Steve Boyce

Ollie Porter's last year in the Elementary School has seen major changes in his education and school experiences. In the middle of March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the District to end in-person learning for the rest of the school year, and create a virtual learning program. The Elementary School resumed in-school socially distanced classes four days a week in September, with Mondays used for virtual learning, and all after-school activities cancelled. Increasing outbreaks of the COVID-19 virus in the community have caused some periods of all-virtual learning.



Ollie's Mask Shows His School Spirit

Ollie, how would you like to be learning right now?

"All in school in a physical classroom. It's easier to learn that way."

Is the virtual learning technology (Google Classroom, etc.) difficult to use?

"Not really, it's easy to use. The problem is that it doesn't work all the time."

Is there anything you like about school right now?

"Well, some days I get to sleep later, and if I say the wrong answer the whole class doesn't hear it, but I don't like not being able to socialize."

Do you feel connected to your teachers?

"For the most part, yes. If I need help when we're not in school, I can use email."

What have you missed the most about not having after school programs?

"Not being able to socialize with my friends."

### Student COVID-19 Perspective

By Zyleen Tyler, 12th Grade Student

Learning during COVID is hard to do. It is extremely difficult to pay attention and learn over a screen. I wish that we were in person instead of on computers. Getting the hang of all the different technology we use for classes isn't too difficult because most of it was at least somewhat familiar for us before COVID hit. Though by no means do I like being virtual half the week. The extra time to sleep in is nice, but doesn't make up for how hard it is to concentrate and pay attention in class. I think being a senior. I am luckier than some of the other grades in regards to connecting with my teachers since the majority of them I have had or have known for a few years now. I do still look forward to my in-person days because I get to truly see and interact more with my friends and teachers. It is really tough trying to have a proper conversation through a screen. If I had the power to change one thing about how I am learning right now it would be that I was able to go to school in person a lot more.

### The Impact of COVID - 19 Inside My Classroom

by Jennee Iturrino - HS Biology Teacher

You may have seen the running jokes on social media about teaching during the pandemic -

"Hello?" "Hellooooo .... Are you there?", "You are muted ..." "You are still muted ..." "Do you want to see my cat?" "Wait - here look at my dog, isn't he cute?" As a teacher, I have heard all of these numerous times and pretty much on a daily basis. The level of distractions has increased tremendously for both teachers and students. The distractions begin with the virus itself. Teachers are worried about their personal health as well as their families, and then they worry about the health, safety and wellbeing of their students and their families. Now the talk is moving towards the vaccine and the science and politics behind that. As a high school biology teacher, discussing what a vaccine is and how it works is part of my curriculum. I also teach students how to recognize reliable resources and understand that everything on social media isn't true. Social media is and always will be a huge distraction for teenagers.

The next set of distractions is how to teach lessons to get them to understand the content. Students have unreliable internet access, limited book resources, lack of organization that teachers need

to troubleshoot (virtually, of course) to help solve their problems. So how does a lesson go? First, I need to take attendance and I may look foolish, but I physically count heads in my room and boxes on the computer screen to make sure I don't miss anyone. Then, I need to upload my projector and computer to display my slideshow for that day's lesson and screen share it to my virtual students, as well as the kids in front of me. This can take anywhere from 2 minutes to 10 plus minutes depending on the internet and all the different displays and settings. Because of copyright issues, teachers can't play videos unless they can find them on an acceptable domain to broadcast to both groups at the same time (which is almost impossible).

Then I go through one section of my slideshow (10 slides max), and as every teacher says - "Does anyone have any questions" and then we hear silence. Complete silence. Awkward silence. Many of the virtual students pretend to listen but they zone out. One student told me, "Mrs. I, I am sorry. I fell asleep yesterday during class and didn't hear anything you said". Sadly, I know she isn't the only one to fall asleep during virtual class. While I am going over the slides, virtual students are logging off, losing internet or interest, or both. This adds to

the distractions.

So where does all this lead? Time for lessons is cut in half, or more than half if the internet doesn't comply that day. What I have done is eliminate things in my curriculum that were covered in middle school life science. I decided back in September to teach the fun stuff. Kids don't want to write down notes and do other boring paperwork. I give them a copy of the notes in the beginning of the unit. I kept the labs and hands-on activities and worksheets that are the most important. I eliminated tests and created more project-based learning. Hands-on activities require a lot on my part. Students wear PPE - disposable gloves, goggles, and masks. I sanitize anything a student touches before another student can have access to those materials. For students who are completely virtual, I create mini lab kits to send home to them. Our old 42 minute lessons are now, at most, 20 minute lessons. So, I make the best use of those 20 minutes as possible. Curriculum wise, I am right where I need to be. As a Regents teacher, I feel my students are doing what is important for that exam. I remind them on a daily basis that this pandemic is an everyday biology lesson. Wear a mask, be smart, be safe and stay

## Sentinel Productions Perseveres During the Pandemic

In March of 2020, Sentinel Productions was just three weeks away from opening Qui Nguyen's dramatic comedy She Kills Monsters. After months of preparation, all of our hard work was about to come to fruition. Through the generosity of the Ticonderoga Alumni Association, we were able to hire a Broadway professional choreographer, Rob Aronowitz. Rob arrived from the city and led our students on an incredible three day workshop, detailing each of the complicated combat sequences. We were all ecstatic about the state of our show.

Two days after concluding the workshop, we held what would be our last rehearsal. Ticonderoga High School would be fully remote for the remainder of the 19-20 school year. Accepting the postponement of the show was difficult for everyone, especially our 2020 seniors.

In September, when we were able to return to school, the students decided we would push through the difficulties of the pandemic. The group chose Laurie Allen's virtual play Quaran-Teens, which is a collection of student monologues about the pandemic. To make sure every interested cast member had a role, sophomore Emma Cook authored an additional scene. The group met and rehearsed virtually, eventually hiring Kasaydia Wind Media to handle the production.

Quaran-Teens and Quaran-Teens II debuted in late January and early February, respectively, and

became the first two virtual shows in the history of Sentinel Productions. The reception from the community was wonderful and the cast was fantastic. The show provided a creative outlet for the students and was simultaneously therapeutic as the actors could relate to many of the issues the characters endure in the various stories.

On February 25, 2021, Sentinel Productions held its first in-person rehearsal in almost a year. And we picked up where we left off: She Kills Monsters is set to debut later this spring. Fortunately, the enriching choreography workshop from last spring was filmed and will still be utilized in the show. Although the show has been partially recast, the work we put in is dedicated to the Drama Club Class of 2020 members: Talandra Hurlburt, Katherine Gallipo, Vivian Porter, Hunter Jordon, Isaiah Mars, Karlee Witherbee, Kelsi Perry, Anthony Kelley, Lucas McCluskey, Kylee Bennett, Madison Flora, and Mackenzie Moses. To those students, we miss you, and your spirit and dedication to this program will never be forgotten.

Sentinel Productions would like to thank the Ticonderoga Alumni Association, The Ticonderoga Festival Guild, The Windchill Factory, Elks Lodge #1494, and Stewarts Shops for their generous donations.

We would also like to thank Mr. Donohue, Junior-Senior High School Principal, for continually giving us



Sophomore Kimberly Wojcik takes combat tips from Broadway choreographer Rob Aronowitz during a Sentinel Productions rehearsal for upcoming dramatic comedy She Kills Monsters. Senior Lorelei Leerkes practices some necessary defense.

the green light to tackle challenging material, as well as Mrs. Ford-Johnston and the Board of Education for their continued support. It is wonderful to live in a community that supports the performing arts, even through historically challenging circumstances.



Now in its ninth year, the backpack program continues to provide much needed food and nutrition to disadvantaged local area school children from low-income families at times when other resources are not available to them - on weekends and in the summer months. Many people are surprised by the level of poverty in the Ticonderoga area. Per recent statistics, over 27% of the school-aged children in our district are from households earning below the Federal Poverty Level. Many of these children receive a major portion of their daily nutrition from the free breakfasts and lunches they receive while at school. Some of them do not even know what "dinner" means. In the summer, their risk of food insecurity is even greater. Even moderate nutritional vulnerability can affect their cognitive development and hinder their prospects throughout their lives.

The backpack program began in January 2013, with 30 students from Ticonderoga Elementary School. From this relatively modest start the program has been able to grow and expand thanks to very generous support from individual donors and grants from charitable organizations. Today the backpack program serves 283 needy children at seven local area schools; Ticonderoga, Crown Point, St. Mary's, Putnam, Schroon Lake, Moriah and Peru. On an annual basis, this equates to 9,400 filled backpacks being sent home on weekends - - the equivalent of 56,000 meals. In addition, the summer food program

provided another 9,000 meals during eight weeks in July & August.

Numbers do not tell the whole story of the program's impact. Here is one recent example – from a mother of two, "Hello, I just want to say how very grateful I am to everyone who helps with this. There have been many times when I just didn't know what I'd do and then the backpacks came. They have literally saved me many times for dinner. I just wanted to let you all know we appreciate this program very much. Thank you for all that you do."

The backpack program faced a major hurdle in March 2020, when schools were suddenly closed due to COVID-19. Prior to closing, kids picked up their filled backpacks at school and returned the empty packs the following week. The program adapted by switching to plastic bags and was able to piggy-back on the school district's quickly improvised system for home-delivery of meals. Despite the closure, the backpack program continued, uninterrupted, from March through the end of the school year in June. In addition, three separate drive-thru free food distributions were arranged at Ticonderoga Elementary-Middle School for the community at large. The fifth year of the summer food program took place in July & August, 2020 with masked volunteers placing a full week of food for each child directly into the parents' cars.

The tremendous volunteer support of the program enables 100% of all donations to be used to buy the food for hungry local area school children. Cumulatively, over \$365,000 has been spent to-date to provide this essential nutrition. The Ticonderoga Area Backpack Program was incorporated in 2017 and is certified as a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization by the IRS. The cost to sponsor one child, for one year, is \$183. For more information, please feel free to contact John Bartlett at: jbartlett1@nycap.rr.com

#### Alumni Association Board of Directors

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·····

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## Do you want to nominate someone for the Distinguished Alumni Award?

Download the Nomination Form on www.ticonderogaalumni.org and follow the instructions on the form.

Time, weather, water, and now budget woes have been unkind to the Ticonderoga High School Portico.

In the summer of 2019, after years of deterioration which included erosion of pillar bases and falling debris from the roof, creating a potentially dangerous situation, it was necessary to erect a temporary protected walkway beneath the portico. This modification, while providing safe entry, obviously detracts from the beauty of a building that has not only served the educational needs of the Ticonderoga School District since 1927, but also has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural significance.

The cost of restoration of the Portico is estimated at \$350,000-\$400,000; a figure well beyond the budget and tax-base of the School District. Interim Superintendent Cynthia Ford Johnston reported the

school district is investigating grant opportunities to help finance the replacement project. In the meantime, the district has created an account to accept donations that could be used as matching funds in grant applications.

Anyone wishing to contribute should make checks payable to the Ticonderoga Central School District and indicate the Portico Replacement Fund. The district mailing address is Ticonderoga Central School District, 5 Calkins Place, Ticonderoga, NY 12883.

As the Portico looks today





By Cynthia Ford Johnston Interim Superintendent, Ticonderoga Central School District Ticonderoga Central has been ever so fortunate to have had consistent, quality leadership for decades. Dr. John C. McDonald, Jr. served the district for over twenty years, until July of 2019.

The search is underway for an individual who will make Ticonderoga their new home. This person must be a leader who will guide the district through the post pandemic challenges and continue the on-going process of meeting the needs of our students as the district prepares them for their future.

The application process closed on February 12th. The Board of Education under the guidance of Dr. Mark Davey, District Superintendent of CVES, has reviewed the candidates. Five individuals have been invited to the first round of interviews set for March 8th & 9th. Teams representing the various groups of our community will meet with these five candidates. Based on their impressions and feedback, the Board of Education will determine which candidates to invite back for second round interviews. The plan is to complete the interviewing process and be ready to appoint the new Superintendent in April, with for a start date of July 1, 2021.

As we remember the Portico

The District is looking forward to the future and being able to welcome a new Superintendent to our community.

#### Thank You 2020 Donors!

#### Sentinel Honor Circle

(Cumulative Donations)

#### \$10,000-\$19,999

Bridget (McDonald) Fawcett Debra (Clarke) Mars Sandy Morhouse & Patty Hogan Andy and Julianne Russell

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#### **2020 Donations**

#### Sentinel Circle \$1,000 and Up

Walter Curtis\* Sandy Morhouse & Patty Hogan\* Andy & Julianne Russell\*

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\*Indicates those who have been donors 3 of the last 4 years.

The Ticonderoga Alumni Association is especially appreciative of all the donors who continue to support our Scholarship Fund.

Every attempt has been made to correctly list our donors. Please contact Steve Boyce (518 585-7735) should there be an error.

## Memorial Donations

In Memory of Michael Andersen, Carolyn & Tom Malaney

- CAROLYN ANDERSEN

In Memory of Patrick Armstrong

- PEGGY ARMSTRONG

In Memory of Richard Arthur & his daughters Kim & Michelle, & son Michael

-ELIZABETH (BETTY ANN) ARTHUR

In Memory of Pat Arthur '53 & Jean Hopkins

-FRAN ARTHUR

In Memory of Alison Baker, Mark Berube, Billy Bush, & John Connors

- M. VIRGINIA (LAPOINTE) SOUTHWORTH

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In Memory of Jennifer, Norma & Francis, Aletta & Glennis Barber, Pearl & Norman Nadeau

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In Memory of Charles Connery & Ernest Eichen

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In Memory of Deceased Members of the Class of 1966
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In Memory of Departed Classmates, Class of 1954

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In Memory of Robert & Anita Dedrick & Mildred Bain

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In Memory of John & Norma Dreimiller
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In Memory of my Brother Richard Varmette Jr. (Skip) -JUDY EUBER

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In Memory of Raymond Wood
-VIRGINIA M.WOOD

In Memory of Nancy Yaw
-MARTY & DEBBIE YAW

In Memory of Rolly & Agnes Yaw, Bob &' Viv' Cossey -NATE & EVE YAW

In Honor of the Class of 1958

-MOIRA & JOHN PARK

In Honor of the Class of 1960 -LINDA D. THOMPSON



## 2021 Extravaganza Weekend Update

Karla Vigliotti '90 & Bob Dedrick'65

Despite the uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we hope to host the Alumni Extravaganza as scheduled in 2021. We currently have events scheduled for July 29, 30, 31, and August 1. During this four-day period, the Extravaganza will feature an Alumni Awards ceremony, a golf tournament, local musicians, an alumni run, alumni tents, two renowned bands, "Bad Chaperones" and "Ruby Shooz", and a phenomenal fireworks display. We will work closely with the Town of Ticonderoga and local businesses to provide a safe event. Please check our Facebook

page: Ticonderoga High School Alumni Association as well as our website www.ticonderogaalumni.org for updates on the Extravaganza. Many thanks to the Extravaganza Committee and all the classes and individuals who have supported our efforts so far.

The image that accompanies this article is the winning entry for the Extravaganza t-shirt design contest sponsored by Terry Brannock '69 of Brannock Properties LLC. There were several very

riccle creative entries and Cody P. Lang of Crown Point received \$100 for her design. The Extravaganza

creative entries, and Cody P. Lang of Crown Point received \$100 for her design. The Extravaganza Committee is working with Jaimee Kuhl (Class of 2004) of Huddy and Co. to create the t-shirts.

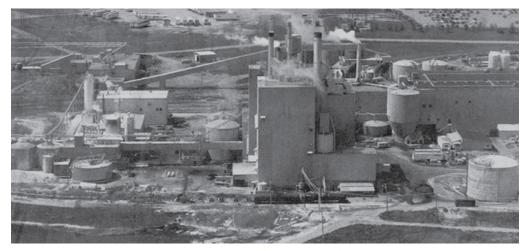
## The Alumni Golf Tournament is tentatively scheduled for July 31st.

You'll be able to enjoy a round on a great new course (and improve your lies in a great new club house!)

# You can come home again

Both the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC) and Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA) have programs designed to attract people back to Ticonderoga. Check out these exciting initiatives on organizations' Facebook pages and websites; ticonderogany.com and ticonderoga-alliance.org.

### "New" Mill 50 Years Old



Do you realize 2021 marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of the International Paper's Ticonderoga Mill on Lake Champlain?



## Ti Alumni Homecoming Last weekend in July



This banner will be displayed annually in Ticonderoga to draw attention to Alumni Events.