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Gananda after-school tutoring program is do-good, feel-good story

By Perry Howland

WALWORTH, Dec. 21- "I hope Santa was watching me when I hugged my friend who was crying," remarked one first-grade girl, explaining that the friend was being picked on.

The impetus for her statement came from Gananda Central teacher Mia Pagano, who is one of six full-time staffers working with children from the Evergreen Hills Apartments in the Gananda district.

Pagano and fellow Gananda teacher and staffer Christina Trovato were sitting like a family at tables with students from grades one and two, playing this sharing game while snacking on donated pizza and soft drinks.

The community center social room of Evergreen Hills was festively decorated for the upcoming holiday, and so were several of the students. Let's hope Santa was watching — not only Pagano and Trovato, but program coordinator Michael VanDeMar and Evergreen Hills Property Manager Kristi Cain and staff — so he would see this caring group of adults making a difference in so many ways for the 30 children who are part of

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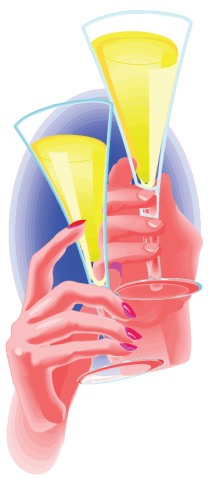
Gananda teacher Mia Pagano (left), Program Director Michael VanDeMar, and Mollie Mattice play a Santa sharing game at the Evergreen Hills Tutoring Program. *(Perry Howland photo)*



Happy New Year! Welcome 2017!

Controversy continues to swirl in Walworth town offices

By Laura Valentine

WALWORTH, Dec. 19 - There are two sides to every story.

Despite different points of view, Walworth Town Supervisor Patti Marini and Town Clerk Susie Jacobs can agree on one thing.

There's a problem.

On November 3, the Walworth Town Board authorized an investigation of Jacobs "because there has been an extremely high rate of turnover in that office and we need to know why, to solve the problem," explains Marini. "We have been contacted by the [terminated] individuals...and that is what precipitated us launching an investigation as to why the turnover rate is occurring...the investigation is ongoing."

Jacobs feels she has trained people so intensely that they've been able to quickly move on to better jobs or career-enhancing situations.

Whether it's a prolonged spat or a governance issue, the board seeks a fundamental change.

Marini said that the Board is looking into a referendum that would allow Walworth residents to change the Town Clerk from an elected position to a board-appointed one. "That is one of our options we are looking at during our investigation," she said.

Jacobs believes the investigation is politically motivated. "Why are taxpayers paying for the supervisor to have political attacks against me? The town board has its own town attorney, but they're not providing me with any kind of counsel."

Jacobs says it's up to her to keep the town board in check, "to keep them on track with what needs to be done in order with the law...If it wasn't for me keeping such wonderful minutes in this town and keeping the records organized, who knows? There's no complaints about my work...about my customer service...there's only the concerns of the political stuff going on here...This is nothing to do with the work, it's all the political backstabbing is what it is."

Marini contends that the lack of coverage in the Town Clerk's office is a big problem. The office has been open only a couple hours a day, if at all. "It makes it very difficult because we don't necessarily know when her office is going to have office hours."

Jacobs sustained a head injury in October while volunteering at a Lion's Club event. She believes town officials should acknowledge that she's injured. "I'm working on trying to get better, and perhaps (they should) stop the attacks regarding me being out. If the supervisor or other council members were so concerned, why aren't they coming in and saying, 'How can we help you? How can we keep the office open?'"

"We're trying to assist the residents as much as possible," says Marini. They provide notary services and leave information in Jacobs' mailbox, but many services are completely controlled by the town clerk's office. Marini explains under state law her office has no authority to change the situation. "It can be very frustrating."

The Deputy Town Clerk position is also steeped in conflict. The deputy position was de-funded by the town board in October; the appointed deputy clerk, Crystal Lewandrowski, currently works without pay. The Board transferred the budget funds to the supervisor's line and hired Patricia Thomas in November in a newly created position assisting the Town Comptroller. Thomas formerly held the deputy clerk position and was terminated by Jacobs in October.

Marini justifies the decision. "Right now, she (Jacobs) has an individual that's available from 3-5...Until the Town Board receives notification that she has somebody to work certain hours, we can't appoint money there." She also says Thomas is "working wonderfully" in her current position.

Would Marini consider re-funding the position?

"I'm not sure at this point in time, until we know what is going on and why there has been such a high rate of turnover there," she said.

Jacobs and Marini also agree that conflict existed long before Jacobs' October injury. Can these two elected

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Gananda after-school tutoring is a feel-good story

From Page 1

this year's tutoring program, which began as a 10-week pilot last spring and was so successful in so many ways that it is back for 30 weeks this year.

The main funding comes from Title I, and is available because all of the students in the program receive some supplemental service, whether it be academic (like reading) or more intensive (requiring an Individual Education Program).

Most of this year's student participants were with the program last year. Two substitute teachers and juniors and seniors from Gananda High School are also part of the caring staff being shepherded this year by Michael VanDeMar, assistant to the high school principal.

The program operates Monday (grade 3), Tuesday (grades 4 and 5) and Wednesday (grades 1 and 2) and will run this year until Memorial Day.

Besides the academic tutoring provided, the children get help and mentoring on social skills, problem-solving, character education and behavior management.

According to VanDeMar, the goal is to "grow the program to all five school days," as there is a demonstrated need for the program.

When senior Enrique Mosman and junior Alizabeth York joined the group, it was their turn for sharing. Enrique hoped Santa was watching when he shared his lunch with a friend that day, but not when he broke a dish when doing dishes the night before.

Several of the children gave him sympathetic looks for his mishap. Both he and Alizabeth, as well as the other teen helpers, get community service credit for helping out.

For Enrique, this was only his second time helping and he looks forward to coming each week.

Getting many kudos from VanDeMar was the Gananda Rotary, which provided funding last year and this year for supplies. Also helping out with donations are Mark's Pizzeria and Wegmans.

Evergreen Property Manager Cain and staff had provided stockings with gifts for the children, and the group does not charge for the use of their facilities.

Books in the room came from the Citizens of the World (COW) Club at the Elementary School. It truly does "take a village" and the children and their parents in the alternative Evergreen Tutoring Program will be all the better for this initiative by Gananda Central School.

Sodus property-description forms have been mailed

The Town of Sodus Assessment Office has mailed property description reports for residential and farm properties located in the Town of Sodus.

The forms can be returned by mail, emailed to SodusAssessor@rochester.rr.com, faxed to (315) 483-4038 or dropped off at the Town of Sodus Municipal building located at 14-16 Mill St in the Village of Sodus.

If you have questions about the form or any other questions including exemptions, please contact the Assessor Nathan Mack in the Assessment office at (315) 483- 6477.

XRX Pioneer Club, Singles will meet

The XRX Pioneer Club will meet for lunch on Thursday, Jan. 12, at the Webster Golf Club, 440 Salt Rd, Webster, from 12 noon. RSVP required to Judy at 585-545-4858.

Please bring donations for HOPE House: cleaning products, detergent, paper products, shaving cream, razors, shampoo, body wash, soap, deodorant, toothpaste.

The next luncheon meeting of the XRX Pioneer Club Singles Group is Friday, Jan. 27, at 12 noon at the Jade Palace, 602 Ridge Rd., Webster. We will order lunch and pay individually. Your RSVP is required to Marie 585-288-2973.

NEWARK—The Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers of Perkins school, in collaboration with the faculty, staff, parents, and students, spent the month of December collecting for the Newark Food Closet.

"Annually, we collect non-perishable food items and winter accessories to share with Newark families in need. At this time of year, when it is so easy to focus on what we might get, it is good practice to focus on what we might give," said Lucille Aranzullo, the Perkins UPK teacher who oversees the drive each year.

"Thank you to everyone who helped make this drive a success. Also, a special thank you to John Meath, who delivers the boxes of food and bags of hats and mittens to the Food Closet."

Aranzullo said she and Cory Robinson, the other UPK teacher at Perkins, along with Kindergarten teachers Kathleen Stanely Elizabeth James, Tiffany Cohrs, Caitlin Arbogast and Stephanie Potter are responsible for the drive.

Showing what they collected are (front row, from left): Matthew Meyers, Adeline Reynolds, Eliza Wells, Elynn Poole, Anderson Burgess, Sloane Colling, and Riley Mayo. Back row from left: Mickey Sargent from the Newark Food Closet, her grandson, Hayden Bridger, Emma Haynes, Myla Kidder, Arrissa Pallister-Eller, Mason Wetmore and Dolly Velte from the Newark Food Closet.

Stop in for a quick business/holiday lunch or a special dinner with family

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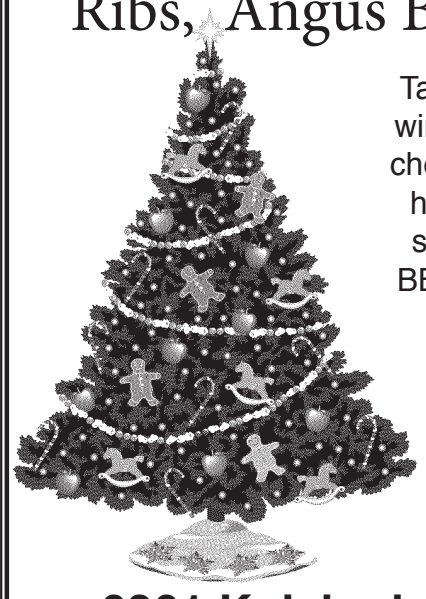

Take the ***Behemoth challenge*** to win great prizes - 2 Angus smoked cheeseburgers, pulled pork, a tasty hot, hickory smoked bacon, cole slaw, fries, onion, jalapenso and BBQ sauce all on a fresh knot roll!

Have us cater your special holiday get together!

6361 Knickerbocker Rd., Ontario
Reservations or Takeout
Call 315-333-1235
Heintzelmansbqpit@gmail.com
Owners: Robert & Dawn Heintzelman

Marion Central School Lunch Menu Jan. 2 - 6

Monday - HOLIDAY RECESS!

Tuesday - Chicken Patty on a wheat bun, Fruit Cup, Fruit Juice, French Fries, Baked Beans, Milk.

Wednesday - French Toast Sticks and sausage patty, Fruit cup, Fresh Fruit, Corn, Veggie Boat Milk.

Thursday - Pepperoni or White Pizza, Fresh Fruit, Fruit Cup, Romaine Salad, Celery sticks w/ dip, Milk.

Friday - Grilled Cheese Sandwich, Fruit cup, 100% fruit juice, Tomato Soup, Broccoli/Carrots with dip, Milk.

This week's school menu is being provided by

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