



*Pine Valley Central School District Newsletter*

**Volume 47, Issue 2 • December 2024**

## **A Message From the Superintendent**

Dear Panther Community,

We have been blessed this year with a lovely fall full of color, warmth, and beauty. As you will see in this fall newsletter edition, our students have had many opportunities during the first quarter of the school year to collaborate, work hard, and be a part of new learning experiences. It is important that we continue to evaluate the experiences of our students, families, and staff. Our administrative team and teacher leaders have been working together to develop goals for our future. They focus on five areas: **Communication, Safety, Social Emotional Learning Implementation, Academic Growth and Teacher and Staff Growth Opportunities**. As promised, families received a survey from the district through the platform Parent Square in November. Information from this survey will help us to evaluate areas of strength and need related to the educational experience of our students and families.



Over the course of the last four years, the district has implemented a new reading and math program. Also newly implemented is the Woz Ed curriculum with a focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) integration and Career Pathways Education. We have also changed from the i-Ready assessment to the NWEA assessment in ELA and Math. With all the recent changes, it is critical we evaluate the programming we have implemented and determine areas where we need to celebrate, adjust, or improve.

In December of 2023, voters approved our most **current capital project**. The district currently has approval from the NYS Education Department on Phase One of the project, which includes air conditioning work in the elementary that is expected to begin in the summer of 2025. **Upgrades to the bus garage are also a part of this project**. As you may be aware, the district has been selected to receive funding through the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Bus Rebate Program. This has allowed the district to receive rebates for eight electric buses when we trade eight diesel buses. Prior to the project, the district had purchased an electric bus from the 2023-24 budget. The bus was delivered in October, with its maiden voyage on November 1, transporting Pine Valley staff to the shared Staff Development Day at Cassadaga Valley. To be ready for the delivery of the additional electric vehicles, the district had to request approval for the work to the bus garage portion to be completed earlier than originally anticipated. The NYS education department has approved the bus garage portion of the project, and the work is scheduled to go out to bid in November, with work starting in the spring of 2025. **Construction for the remainder of the project is slated for the 2025-26 school year** and includes the kitchen at the JR/SR High School and upgrades to our auditorium. The district also has capital outlay work slated to be completed this year. This will include refinishing of the JR/SR High School gym floor.

As we approach the holiday season, I want to express my gratitude to the Pine Valley community. I truly am grateful for the staff, students, and families that make this such a special place. I wish you blessings as you head into this busy time of year and thank you for all you do for our school and community.

Sincerely,

Shanda DuClon, Superintendent – Pine Valley Schools

# Jr./Sr. High School News

by Mrs. Kourtney Almeida, Jr./Sr. High School Principal

## Honeybees



This quarter, Mrs. Kestler's Biology students had the opportunity to learn about group behavior by observing honeybees. Sam Radicella, the former President of Chautauqua County Beekeeper's Association, and his wife, Robbie Radicella, taught the students about bee behavior and brought an observation hive where students were able to view the three different types of honeybees. The students were fascinated by the observation hive and enjoyed seeing science in action. Mrs. Kestler and her students greatly appreciate Sam and Robbie coming to Pine Valley for this presentation.

## Science Bowl

Pine Valley Jr./Sr. High School students participated in the fourth annual Science Bowl held Friday, October 11, 2024, at The State University of New York at Fredonia.



## Crystal Pumpkins in Mrs. Maltbie's Class



After learning about the "Great Pumpkin Fall Festival" in Clarence NY, students in Mrs. Maltbie's class made Crystal Pumpkins. Students experimented with solutions of salt water until they created a super saturated solution. They then poured the super saturated salt water onto pumpkin shapes and let them sit. After a couple days the water evaporated leaving the salt crystals behind on the pumpkins.



Students also made "Scarecrow Season Snack Mix" to celebrate

fall. Not only did they make a yummy snack they worked on reading, measuring, and following directions.

During "Fat Bear Week" students learned about grizzly bears at Katmai National Park in Alaska. Students and some teachers voted for their favorite fat bear in the bracket on-line. They learned what bears eat and what it takes to survive hibernation. Students then made a bear sleeping in a blanket and enjoyed their hibernating bear snacks.





## *Focused on their futures:* Students explore college & career possibilities with help from counselors



*The annual College Consortium was attended by dozens of juniors and seniors at Pine Valley Jr./Sr. High in September.*

The Counseling Department has facilitated a variety of field trips and experiences for students at Pine Valley Jr./Sr. High to kick off the 2024-2025 academic year.

To kick things off and to get our juniors and seniors thinking seriously about their post-graduation plans, the district welcomed representatives from nearly two dozen higher learning institutions on Wednesday, September 25, 2024, for the annual College Consortium. All seniors and juniors were encouraged to explore their options and ask questions.



*Students took a field trip to Jamestown Community College in October for Healthcare Career Exploration Day.*

A group of upperclassmen enjoyed a field trip to Healthcare Career Exploration Day on Friday, October 18, 2024, at Jamestown Community College. Our Panthers got glimpses at many different programs via hands-on activities and were also able to tour the Occupational Therapy Assistant lab, nursing simulation lab, and participate in an acute care simulation. They finished the day with a healthcare professionals panel discussion led by Dr. Lillian Ney.

The Counseling Department arranges an array of career-centric excursions and higher education opportunities for students.

Tentative excursions this year center on manufacturing, the automotive industry, and fire protection/emergency services. Tours of Villa Maria, SUNY Geneseo, and SUNY Fredonia are also planned.

### *What is a School Counselor?*

You are likely familiar with the term “guidance counselor,” but did you know that the profession has evolved, the duties have shifted, and the title has now changed to “school counselor?” What’s the difference? Early “guidance counselors” were reactive in their approach; they only served “some” students, and many of their activities revolved around academic scheduling and career planning. Over time, school counseling became a more comprehensive role that did not merely focus on vocation, and the term “school counselor” became preferred. This shift reflected a school counselor’s proactive approach and service to ALL students in the areas of academic achievement, social-emotional development, and college and career exploration. In 1990, the American School Counselor Association officially requested that the profession adopt the term “school counselor” as the term “guidance counselor” no longer accurately reflected the role.



### **2025-2026 Scheduling Meetings:**

Starting in January, the Counselors will meet with students in grades 7-11 to discuss their schedules for the next school year. Our Curriculum Guide will be posted online, including graduation pathways and requirements, course descriptions, and other academic programming information. This is a great time for parents to start conversing with their child(ren) about their path to graduation and what classes they want to take. The Counseling Office will send additional information on the process once it gets closer to the appointment dates.

### **FAFSA:**

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) will be fully available by December 1st. If your child is thinking about going to college in 2025-2026, you will need to register and complete the online form. The new simplified form has fewer questions than prior years.

You can get a head start on the process today by requesting your Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID on [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). Your FSA ID is a unique username and password combination that you use to sign into the FAFSA form. The student and all other contributors (parents) need to request an FSA ID.

Once you submit your identifying information, you will receive an email with your ID (this may take a few days).

To assist you with the process, we will have an educational presentation with an expert from Jamestown Community College’s Financial Aid Office at Pine Valley on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 6:00 pm in room 125. Please plan on attending this informative session and stay for the workshop to work on your individual FAFSA application! Register with the Counseling Department by calling Mrs. Youngberg at extension 4050.

### ***RAD (Recent Alumni Discussion) Panel***

After a successful panel last year, we are excited to host our 2nd annual Recent Alumni Discussion Panel (RAD Panel), where PV Alumni will share their experiences, give advice, and answer questions from our current seniors. Alumni will meet with the group of Seniors on Tuesday, January 7, 2025, during the regular school day.

### **High School Insight Night For 8th Grade Students And Families**

**Friday, February 12  
6:00PM | Pine Valley High School**

Are you ready for high school? We invite 8th-grade students and their families to our Insight Night (aka Freshmen Orientation). This event will cover essential information about high school coursework, credits, exam requirements, and career development pathways. Our presentation will help students and families equip themselves with the knowledge to navigate high school successfully! Join us on February 12, 2025, at 6 pm in the High School.



## Instant Admit Day With Jamestown Community College:

We were so excited to offer our seniors our first-ever “Instant Admit Day” with Jamestown Community College. Students met with an admissions representative to complete their college application and ask questions about college. Students heard immediately if they were admitted! Completing a college application can be intimidating to some seniors, so we felt it was appropriate to help them overcome that hurdle. With one application done, we hope they are inspired to complete more! But we are always here to help students along the way. Reach out anytime.

### Sophomores & Juniors:

This year is a fantastic time to really start focusing on college and/or career planning. Consider these tips depending on your pathway:

- **College Bound students:**
  - Research colleges and narrow down your list. Then start visiting campuses!
  - Brainstorm application essay topics.
  - Consider who you might ask to write a letter of recommendation.
  - Work on your resume.
  - Get involved in extracurriculars and take on leadership positions.
  - Take an SAT or ACT.
  - Consider the finances of your family and yourself (create a budget).
- **Career Bound students:**
  - Explore your interests and strengths – take an Interest Survey online or other personality assessments.
  - Research occupations and the level of training or preparation you need.
  - Take relevant courses in high school- or take something out of your comfort zone.
  - Attend career fairs or other events to learn about various job opportunities.
  - Ask to job shadow a profession you are interested in learning more about.
  - Volunteer! It's an excellent way to explore your interests, learn about yourself, and help others.
  - Get a part-time job, build your skill set, and start saving money.
  - Open a bank account and start developing a budget.

### Seniors:

The next few months are very important for students who are looking to continue their education beyond high school:

- **Testing** – If the institution you are considering for requires an SAT or ACT exam score, be sure that you have taken one of these exams at least once. **IF NOT – GET SIGNED UP!!** Information on these exams is available in the Counseling Office and online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) (SAT) or [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) (ACT).
- **Selection** - The process of researching, planning visits, and narrowing down possible post-secondary options needs to be a priority. It is highly recommended that students and parents visit the institutions they are considering attending.
- **Applications** - Application deadlines vary from school to school, so be sure to check the deadlines for the schools you are considering. Many schools have deadlines as early as October and November. Students and parents need to be aware of application deadlines.
- **Financial Aid** - The financial aid process will be the primary focus in December and into January. Financial aid includes grants and scholarships available through the colleges. Sometimes, you have to apply separately for these.
- **Federal Aid** – The FAFSA Form drives the federal student aid process. This form cannot be filled out until December 1, 2024.
- **GET YOUR PIN NOW**



## SAT:

Cost: \$68 fee waivers available for those who qualify. Late fee cost: +\$34

**SAT Registration:** Registration can **only** be done online at [www.sat.collegeboard.com](http://www.sat.collegeboard.com). Students may request an appointment to meet with their counselor to assist in registering online. However, if they do not qualify for the fee waiver, they will have to finish registration at home with a parent (due to the payment portion).

The fee for this exam must be paid online. Students who are on Pine Valley's free or reduced lunch program may request a fee waiver from the counseling office.

Saturday exams are given at area high schools (not at Pine Valley). Students can choose their test locations during registration. Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the actual exam. Pine Valley may offer an in-school exam when possible.

Photo identification is now a requirement for registering and taking the SAT. When you register online, you will be required to upload a photo of yourself. This photo must meet their requirements: the photo shows only you, facing the camera, head and shoulders only, nothing obscuring your face (hair, hands, shadows, glare, sunglasses), and the photo is focused (not fuzzy or grainy). If you need assistance with this, the counseling office can assist.

Make sure you choose to share your SAT Score with Pine Valley. This is important if you would like your score on your high school transcript.

Test Dates	Registration Deadlines	Late Registration
August 24, 2024	August 9, 2024	August 13, 2024
October 5, 2024	September 20, 2024	September 24, 2024
October 24, 2024	September 13, 2024	*PV In-School Test Day
November 2, 2024	October 18, 2024	October 22, 2024
December 7, 2024	November 22, 2024	November 26, 2024
March 8, 2025	February 21, 2025	February 25, 2025
April 3, 2025	TBD	*PV In-School Test Day
May 3, 2025	April 18, 2025	April 22, 2025
June 7, 2025	May 22, 2025	May 27, 2025

After you complete the registration process, you will be directed to print your **"admission ticket."** This is **very important** and should be stored in a safe place and taken with you to the exam. More directions and expectations for your test date are also outlined on this admission ticket.

**\*\* SCAM ALERT:** It has been brought to the attention of the NYS Education Department that parents and/or guardians of children who have recently taken an SAT or PSAT exam have been receiving scam calls requesting that the parent/guardian provide personal information, including a credit card number, to mail the test results. Please be advised that any legitimate SAT test or prep organization would not request payment or personal financial details over the phone for test results. If you receive such a call, hang up immediately. We are sending this reminder because parents and/or guardians of children who have recently taken an SAT or PSAT exam have been receiving scam calls requesting personal information, including a credit card number, to mail the test results.

## CAREER DAY

MARCH  
25

The Counseling Department is hosting a Career Day on March 25, 2025. We are looking for individuals within the community to share information about their jobs, workplaces, and the education and skills that are required for a successful career. If you are interested or know someone who might be interested in sharing this information with our students, please contact the Counseling Office at 716-988-3276 ext. 4050.

## Elective Fair

This winter, students in grades 7-11 will again be invited to take part in our annual Elective Fair. This event takes place during the regular school day. Students will rotate between rooms for short sessions with our teachers to learn about the courses they will be offering in the 2025-2026 school year. This is an informative and interactive event to help our students make informed decisions about their coursework and their individual pathway to graduation.



## ACT:

*Cost: \$69 (No Writing section) or \$94 (Includes Writing section). Late fee cost: +\$38.  
Fee waivers are available.*

**ACT Registration:** Registration is very similar to the SAT. Students must register for the ACT online. Test centers include Dunkirk, Fredonia, Hamburg, JCC, Olean, and Pioneer, to name a few. The fee for the exam must be paid online. Students on Pine Valley's free or reduced lunch program are eligible for a fee waiver but must request one from their counselor. Make sure you choose to share your ACT Score with Pine Valley. This is important if you would like your score on your high school transcript.

Test Dates	Registration Deadlines	Late Registration
September 14, 2024	August 9, 2024	August 25, 2024
October 26, 2024	September 20, 2024	October 7, 2024
December 14, 2024	November 8, 2024	November 22, 2024
February 8, 2025	January 3, 2025	January 20, 2025
April 5, 2025	February 28, 2025	March 16, 2025
June 14, 2025	May 9, 2025	May 26, 2025
July 12, 2025	June 6, 2025	June 20, 2025

## SCHOLARSHIPS:

There are many scholarship applications received in the counseling office throughout the course of the school year. A partial listing of those received to this point is included on the Pine Valley website: [www.pval.org](http://www.pval.org) > Jr/Sr High School > Counseling Department > Seniors > Scholarship Links.

The Counseling Office also sends notice of available scholarships to all seniors via their school email account. Students are strongly encouraged to check their email daily for various reasons, in addition to scholarship opportunities.

We encourage students to apply for as many scholarships as they can. Students interested in applying or those with questions should see anyone in the Counseling Office.

## CTE Presentation & Visitations:

On December 6th, Sophomore students will attend a presentation about the Career and Technical Education programs available at the LoGuidice Educational Center in Fredonia. This is an opportunity for students to get a peek at what programs are available, the qualifications for enrollment, the benefits of CTE, and everything else the center offers to students.

On January 6, 2025, students who are interested in pursuing a path in career and technical education will be given an opportunity to visit the LoGuidice Educational Center in Fredonia. Students can learn more about how classes are organized, how credits at BOCES are earned, what college articulation agreements are available, and what kinds of work-based learning they could be involved in.

After the presentation and tour, the next step is for students to meet with their counselor to discuss their high school graduation plan. If a CTE program is within their goals, we will send home a letter and an agreement form for parents and students to review together. When this form is returned, we will start the registration process. If you have questions about this program, please call our office.

## PSAT- Individual Score Summaries:

Many juniors took the PSAT in October, and the results will be available this winter. Each student will individually review their scores with their school counselor. The PSAT score report gives students valuable information about their strengths and weaknesses that they can use to prepare for the SAT. Scores are reported in three ways- Reading and Writing, Math, and a total score. We encourage students to examine each section, celebrate their successes, and then target their areas for growth. The score reports will also include a Career Insights Snapshot that includes a list of growing careers in our state that need skills like theirs. Score reports also contain a selection index to help connect students to potential scholarships. Again, school counselors will review these score reports individually with each student.



# Elementary School News

*by Mrs. Brandi Meacham, Elementary School Principal*



Hello Panther Families!

I can't believe we are already through one quarter of the school year! The elementary school has been busy this fall! In October, we held a School Safety Spirit week where we celebrated Fire Safety, 5th grade Safety Patrol, our 6th grade Creating a Safe School (CASS) team, School Safety, and so much more! Mrs. Leslie Milliman led our school in celebrating The Big Apple Crunch on National Apple Day! We ate the most delicious apples together outside in the beautiful fall weather. Our local fire departments and our own School Resource Officer prepared a day of informational stations for students at all grade levels to learn about emergency responses. Mr. Huestis helped us learn about and celebrate Indigenous People with our White Pine Dancers assembly. During our PBIS assembly in October, students and staff competed for prizes to see who could answer questions about our school and PBIS program the fastest! Although our staff won last year, the students took the win this year! Halloween always brings joy at the elementary level with fun stations, costumes, trick-or-treating around the building, and parades! Thank you to the families that could join us for some of the events. This year, we are seeing an increase in involvement within the school and at events due to our Parents as Teacher Organization! If you want to get more involved or share ideas, reach out to our PTO! As always, the fun will continue around here, but so will the learning. We work very hard to ensure classroom time is used widely to promote growth in all of our students. Please join us for Parent-Teacher Conferences. If you missed one for any reason, do not hesitate to reach out to the teacher now! ParentSquare has been a fabulous tool for two-way communication this year. I hope you are enjoying the ease of talking to our staff as well. As always, I have loved my time with your children every day! Thank you for all the family support and teamwork when needed! Let's have a wonderful 2024-2025 school year!

Thank you,  
Brandi Meacham, Elementary Principal





## September Students of the Month



### UPK - 6th Grade

Bailee Castellano	Valor Albright
Bailey Wykstra	Savanah Jones
Solstice Haskins	Mason Daniels
Dax Martin	Paislee Steward
Carson Colburn	Aveline Hill
Ivy Vancise	JuneAllyz
Sally Emke-Walker	Santiago
Ersel Foster	Luke Smallback
Adalynn Mathews	Kaliyanei Pilarski
Emerson Moss	Obed Rosario
	Joseph Kelley



Isabel Maillard  
Dax Martin  
Luca Gross  
Scarlett Fountain  
Valor Albright  
Air Paff  
Grace Kelley



### Music

Isabel Maillard  
JD Kennison  
Sally Emke-Walker  
Westley Parmenter  
Wyatt Bell  
Remington Astry  
Gabiella Sebastiano  
John Thomas



### Library

Emma Richter  
JD Kennison  
Gaige Moss  
Caleb Kelley  
Olivia Almeida  
Paislee Steward  
Shawna Pettygrove  
Rosaleigh Stewart  
Lilah Asel

### Physical Education

Willard Johnson  
Emerson Moss  
Carter Mathews  
Abigail Kelley  
Brantley Johnston  
Rachelynn Meacham



### Technology

Molly Robertson  
Tabitha Hill  
James Cox



*Congrats Students of the Month!*



## STEM/STEAM Movement in the Pine Valley ES Library



Thank you to Woz ED, inspired by Steve Wozniak. Pine Valley Schools have embraced the STEM/STEAM Movement in the library and the art classes. STEM is creating new career pathways for our students. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

The 4 UPK students use their imaginations as they play and explore with puppets, building blocks, tinker toys, and magnetic tiles. With the Jolly Helpers Hand Puppets, students act out scenes, tell stories, practice new words, and talk about their emotions. The students had fun acting out scenes of what it looks like to be a Firefighter, Doctor, and Police Officer when preparing for an emergency.

When introducing these STEM/STEAM activities, students are learning how to become effective communicators, solve problems, and bring (ideas) critical thinking skills to the table. They're beginning to contemplate what they may want to be when they grow up as they experience real-world scenarios. These building experiences provide a learning experience for our students' success in their future as they connect with STEM/STEAM activities.

Stay tuned for our next article that pertains to Color Coding. Students in grades UPK through 2 will learn the basics of how to code a robotic car named Sphero Indi.

The programmers of tomorrow are the wizards of the future.

- Gabe Newell





## White Pines Singers and Dancers Return to Pine Valley Elementary

In recognition of Indigenous Peoples Day Monday October 13, a local Seneca performance group—the White Pines Singers and Dancers— came to Pine Valley Elementary School on Friday, October 18. This was their second time visiting (they were first invited last spring) and were well received by everyone. Their 45-minute set included a number of social dances popular within their culture. Hilton Johnny-John leads the group of four men and two women performers. It is their mission to showcase the cultural heritage of the Seneca Nation to a wide audience who may not be familiar with these customs. The dances they performed included the Robin Dance, the Men’s Warrior Dance, the Women’s Shuffle Dance, and the Smoke Dance.

Many students were invited to join them in each the dance circles, and even some adults were encouraged to participate.

According to Johnny-John, “These social dances are encouraged to be a form of self-expression along with a chance to get up and shake a leg and enjoy each other’s company.” It is their hope and belief these songs and dances bring good medicine to all.

Prior to the performance, the 4th grade class was treated to a workshop where they learned about the different instruments used in the performances. Items such as the water drum, the frame drum, and the bull horn rattles were passed around for the students to try. With such rich cultural Native American tradition so close to Pine Valley’s students in many directions, it is an important thing to introduce the students to a bit of that culture, and not surprisingly, everyone was eager to meet and very welcoming of the White Pines Singers and Dancers. We all hope to see them again in the future.



## Incentive Days

Incentive Days at Pine Valley Central School District are intended to reward students for trying their hardest and doing their best. And a couple new additions to campus are enhancing the camaraderie and creativity during time of enjoyed outdoors. Students and staff had a blast checking out the new gaga ball and 9-square equipment for collaborative fun and games at the five-week incentive day at Pine Valley Elementary School in October 2024.





## Class of 1974

The Class of 1974 enjoyed a tour of Pine Valley Central School District in September during its 50-year reunion weekend celebration. Principal Kourtney Almeida says she had a blast giving the alumni a tour of the facilities. Classes planning reunions are welcome to reach out to the district to inquire about future tours.



## PTO Santa's Workshop

The Parent Teacher Organization of Pine Valley Elementary School could use volunteers to plan and work the annual Santa's Secret Shop. Assistance is needed in organizing the event, setting it up with shopping "elves" to assist the children in selecting gifts. Volunteers can work the whole day or in 2-hour chunks, whatever they can offer. Those interested can please reach out to the PTO via Facebook or through email- [pvcps.pto@gmail.com](mailto:pvcps.pto@gmail.com).



*Photo of 2023 Santa's Secret Shop*

## The Write Stuff



*Pictured: Students from the classrooms of Sierra Rocque and Brianna Grieswich present and share their stories.*

Third-graders at Pine Valley Elementary School authored their own "Magic Treehouse" stories in October 2024.

The students used story elements from "Magic Treehouse" stories they read as a class to create their own tales. They met with other classmates and teachers to add details and edit their stories.

They used peer-to-peer collaborative editing strategies to strengthen writing skills. They focused on visualization by listening to their classmates read their stories then providing feedback on areas they are unable to picture in their mind. They added pictures to help bring their tales to life.

Our Panthers also learned how to use a thesaurus. They presented their tales to their classmates and enjoyed hearing and comparing each other's stories.



## A Hands-On Approach to Regulating Emotions at PVES



The PAWS Den is a new specialized therapeutic intervention tool offered to Pine Valley Elementary School students in need of a sensory approach to emotional regulation and expression.

This intervention is used in conjunction with Special Education counseling services in its early stages. It is expanded to be offered to other students receiving Special Education services as a tool to support their learning.

The PAWS Den is modeled after Snoezelen Multi-Sensory Environment, an approach developed by Dutch therapists in the 1970's. They conducted research over five decades to further develop and improve the elements included in their multi-sensory environments. The Snoezelen name is a contraction of the Dutch verbs “snuffelen” (to seek and explore) and “doezelen” (to relax). More information can be found online at [www.snoezelen.info](http://www.snoezelen.info)

When developing the PAWS Den, Related Services staff installed Snoezelen-inspired fixtures, such as water/bubble towers, a variety of soothing lighting options, tactile-sensory floor tiles, texture wall panels, projectors, sound machines, and soft seating options. These fixtures offer both visual and tactile sensory input to either wake up or calm down a student's body systems. A session in the PAWS Den puts the user in control of their environment allowing them to explore while also promoting discussion of feelings and creating an awareness of what is calming to that individual.

The Related Services department is excited to utilize this person-centered approach to regulation, expression and learning.

Soothing lighting options, water/bubble towers, sound machines and soft seating options are just a few sensory features of the PAWS Den at Pine Valley Elementary School.



## Science



Fifth-grade and sixth-grade students created a cloud in a bottle during September 2024 science lessons at Pine Valley Elementary School.





## Big Apple Crunch



*The entire elementary school took the Big Apple Crunch challenge in October on the front lawn of the campus.*

Most recently, elementary students and staff united on the front lawn on Tuesday, October 22, 2024, to bite into locally grown apples in unison in celebration of New York State food and farms. The Big Apple Crunch initiative is observed annually in October and this is the second year our Panther family participated in collaboration with the New York State Education Department Child Nutrition Program.

Our Panthers will continue to enjoy agriculture-centric lessons this year including virtual farm visits, maple-syrup making and, of course, our much-anticipated annual Tractor Day in the spring.

## Growing Together

The emphasis on appreciation for agriculture has deep roots at Pine Valley Central School District.

Across our Elementary and Jr./Sr. high schools, our educators make a point to explore the numerous farming and production related opportunities in Western New York.

Autumn is ripe for agricultural adventures in our region, and Panthers of all grade levels are enjoying opportunities to get outside and do some hands-on learning this academic year.

A group of Pine Valley Jr./Sr. High students -- included Future Farmers of America members and Small Animal Science students in the Career & Technical Education division of Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES -- took a field trip to Alfred State Farm for Veterinary, Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology Career Discovery Day on Thursday, October 10, 2024.

The event attracted more than 1,000 students from 40 school districts and was organized by Alfred State College's Agriculture and Veterinary departments. The day featured hands-on activities and events staged around the farm. ASC employees and students encouraged attendees to try surveying land, performing a livestock ultrasound, operating heaving equipment, and more.



*Upperclassmen enjoyed a field trip to Alfred State Farm for Veterinary, Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology Career Discovery Day in October 2024.*



## Mayan Salsa



*Elementary students picked apples on campus and made applesauce to share with family and friends in September 2024.*

Students of teacher Lyndsay Feuerstein at Pine Valley Elementary made some core memories in September when they ventured to the campus orchard for some apple-picking. They returned to the classroom with their bounty and made applesauce to share at the Outside Open House held September 17, 2024. These same students later prepared "Mayan salsa" to complement a history unit about ancient civilizations. They all participated in making and enjoying the salsa.



*Students at the elementary school prepare salsa as part of a unit on ancient civilizations.*



## Celebrating Community Heroes



Our Panther family at Pine Valley Elementary School celebrated area fire departments, emergency responders, our school resource officer, and nurses Tuesday, October 8, 2024, in observance of Community Superhero Day and National Fire Prevention Week. Students enjoyed the themed dress-up event and interacting with hometown heroes. Thank you to the South Dayton Volunteer Fire Company and Chautauqua County Sheriff's Department for joining us. Our Panther family is grateful to all those working tirelessly to protect our community.





## Creative Ways We Support our Students' Social and Emotional Learning



*Principal Brandi Meacham caught a yoga class in action one recent morning at Pine Valley Elementary School.*

Developing resilience and grit are fundamental to young minds, and Pine Valley Elementary is taking some creative approaches to supporting all students socially and emotionally during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Our pre-Kindergartners in Mrs. Lindquist's four-year-old class started doing yoga during their morning social-emotional learning time. All the students line up and work on different poses intended to help them strengthen their minds and bodies.

Third-graders read "My Strong Mind," a book about positive thinking written by Niels van Hove, together at Pine Valley Elementary School.

The main character faces different challenging situations and models how we can use positive self-talk to help embrace mistakes and persevere through difficulties and challenges. After reading the book, the students cut and colored "fortune tellers" made of paper. Some affirmations practiced were "Mistakes are part of learning," "Trying new things helps your brain grow," "If something feels hard, that means you're getting smarter," and "The more effort you put in, the better you'll become."

The students then played together and stated positive affirmations to each other. Teacher Sierra Rocque says the best part of it all is she hears students repeating the affirmations when they encounter something difficult in the classroom.



*Positive affirmations can help soothe and motivate students. Two third-graders admire their handmade "fortune tellers."*



### Boy's Varsity Soccer



Coach Jeff Housler

The Pine Valley Boys Soccer Team started its season with a 4-3 loss to Silver Creek, with just 13 seconds left Silver Creek scored to secure the win. The team is young and knew there was a long road ahead. The players took it upon themselves to improve at every practice and every game; it showed by the end of the season. The highlight of the season came on Senior night, where Pine valley put all their hard work together and came away with a dominant 3-0 shutout victory against Cattaraugus-Little Valley/Salamanca. We earned a home playoff game

against Eden. We started out strong and went into halftime with a score tied 1-1. Unfortunately, we lost 4-1. We had multiple players to score a goal or have an assist during the season. Aiden Bell scored 1 goal, Sawyer Bradigan scored 2 goals and had 4 assists, Hayden Chase scored 1 goal, Noah Frontuto scored 4 goals and had 5 assists, Jarrett Meyers scored 4 goals and had 3 assists, Andres Morillas scored 1 goal and had 1 assist, lastly Landon Reger scored 1 goal and had 1 assist. We had 7 athletes get honored with their high level of play. Noah Frontuto was selected for 1st All Star. 6 players were awarded the honorable mention. The 6 players were Sawyer Bradigan, Jarrett Meyers, Hayden Chase, Landon Reger, Andres Morillas, and Cyrus Jackson.

### JV Volleyball

For JV Volleyball this year, the Lady Panthers fielded a small team with only six girls from eighth and ninth grade. Even though our numbers were small, these girls played every game with heart and determination. They all knew the value of their presence and what it meant for the team to rely on them and never to give up. It was a building year, and they used this to their advantage. The skills that they improved upon will make them a true force to be reckoned with in future years. Ninth grader Addison Lyndsley helped our team with her powerful serve and being a true utility player. Our setters this year included two eighth graders, Ashlynn Silleman and Rosa Greene. These two moved seamlessly across the court to set up hits from our ninth graders, Saphera Lindquist and Kieran Zollinger and eighth grader Vicki Erickson. Although the win-loss record was not ideal, these girls learned the value of work, team, and reliability. And these might be the most important life lessons sport can provide. It was a pleasure to work with them, and I cannot wait to see what their future holds.



Coach Jill Szumigala



## *PV/Gowanda Girl's Varsity Soccer*



Coach Karah Herman

This group of young women is made up of some of the strongest-minded student-athletes I have ever coached. Every year, it is all about learning to work together, making new friends, creating memories that will last a lifetime, and, most importantly, learning the real-life skills that will impact their lives after high school. Our season was full of amazing celebrations and learning to deal with difficult times, which taught us the importance of persevering. We ended our season 3-14. We wish the best of luck to our seniors, Sarah Kruszka (Captain), Destiny Lindquist (Captain), Julianna Yasurek (Captain), and Madison Mosher, in all of their future endeavors. And we hope to see all our underclassmen back next season. Juniors include Katie King (Captain), Rayne Bruyer, Jada

Sterling, and Addison Smith. Sophomores: Sandy Ivett, Sam Collins(G), Lauren Hostetter(G), Kyra Hurley(G), Taylor Yoder(G), Tayleigh Williams(G). Freshmen: Ashley Irwin and Brookelynn Sterling. 8th Graders: Carlie Postle, Mackenzie Schroeder, and Kalie Belinger(G). And finally, our 7th graders, Lakelyn Brisley & Tanner Peate. Thank you, Chandell Nichols, for volunteering & helping us when you were available. Thank you, Dee Herman, for being an awesome timekeeper, statistician, and bus driver. Thank you, Ryan Stefanik, for keeping our field in pristine condition. Thank you to our awesome Athletic Director, Chris Buczek.

## *Varsity Volleyball*

This season's volleyball team consisted of four seniors Lizzie Roland, Danica Farnham, Sara Sunick, and Johanna Mendrok. We also had sophomores Cameron Rinehart, Breanna Snyder, Lily Hohl, and Autumn Bailey. Finally, our freshman Ava West. Our team had the pleasure of welcoming our first managers this year Emma Buczek and Brooke Silleman.

It was very rewarding to see all the JV players I have coached persevere through some difficult times this season. We are all so proud of how hard these girls worked all season on their mental and physical game. Our overall record was 8-13 and our division record was 4-6. This season's ending was bittersweet, as we say good-bye and best wishes to the seniors. However, next year will be a promising season having most of the starters returning. We ended the season with the 2nd Annual Trunk or Treat for community service events. We will continue to keep working in the off season with open gyms and summer league volleyball.

Thank you to all the families for their support and to Chris Buczek for all his behind-the-scenes work. Thank you so much to Miss Patsy who was the best bus driver ever! A special thank you to Kaitlin Hayes and Kaitlyn Hoth for your support and assistance this season.



Coach Tara Hayes

## Girl's Modified Volleyball

The Lady Panthers Modified Volleyball team finished their season on October 17th. There were so many great things that happened this year. Each year the participation number of volleyball players increase, this year we were up to 15. It was great to have a lot of returning players this year. A lot of the 8th graders used their knowledge from last year to teach the new 7th graders. The 8th graders will be missed next year, but they will be acing it up on the JV Level. All of the 7th graders grew massively with their volleyball skills throughout the season. It will be great next year when they have the experience and come back as 8th graders. This group of ladies that I had on modified this year will be a great group to build the volleyball program over the next couple of years. Overall, this group of ladies was an awesome group to work with. I enjoyed my time with them this past month. I am extremely proud of how these girls played this year, with most of them never playing volleyball in their lives before. Ladies remember to keep your head up and play until the whistle goes.



Coach Zachary Len

**Front Row (Left to Right)** – Grace Rinehart/ Isabella Phillips/ Taylor Postle/ Lily Sawatis

**Middle Row (Left to Right)** – Samara Irwin/ Jena Lawton/ Evelyn Smith/ McKayla Ebel/ Rylyn Herzog

**Back Row (Left to Right)** – Coach Len/ Gianna Pagan/ Brenda Yoris/ Mihrina Joyce/ Autumn Dybka/ Sandee Hosmer

**Missing From Picture** – Scarlett Horvath

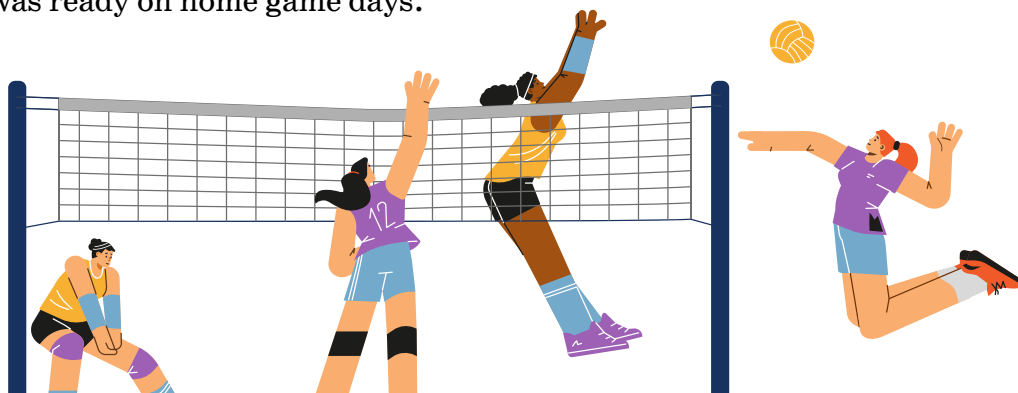
### Special Thanks to these people

*Ryan Riley* – Being accommodating and helpful whenever I needed the help. Setting up all of our home games (Setting up the bleachers, making sure the scorer's table is set up along with the chairs, and making sure the floor is swept before every game). Your support to the team was unnoticed.

*Joe Parisio* – Thank you for the help this year even if the task was a difficult one. You don't know how much I appreciate it.

*Darlene Morrison* – Thank you for being the main Bus driver for our games getting us to and from everywhere we went safely.

*Chris Buczek* – A BIG THANK YOU to the Athletic Director. If you were not around there would be no modified volleyball team or any sports teams. Thank you for setting up our schedule and making sure everything was ready on home game days.





## Football



Varsity Football Team

Another football season comes to a close as the Varsity Panthers combined with Gowanda are entering their first round of playoffs against Wilson. It has been a hard fought year with many close games. The scores don't reflect the teams hard work and practice. The modified team has progressed so much as well. They were able to have a few big wins versus really tough teams. Pine Valley brought over 16 athletes to Gowanda this year. That number continues to grow. Big shoutout to the men stepping up and finishing the Varsity Season, Cam Slade, Cam Howard, Zane Rogers, Riley Kenna. The 9th grade modified players were all invited to spend their last week playing Varsity, Dom Austin, Kaden Helman, and Kayden Schunk and Tyler Pfleuger. We look forward to having the rest of the players to step up next year and be leaders on Modified, CJ Colvin, Ayden Hohl, Chad Schunk, Connor Schunk and Tyler Dybdahl, Draven Silleman and Noah Cowles.



Modified Football Team



## Transportation Teams Strengthen Skills Together

The Transportation Departments of the Pine Valley and Cassadaga Valley central school districts spent a recent morning collaborating ahead of the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.

The group enjoyed breakfast at PVCS prior to embarking on a Scavenger Hunt around Chautauqua County. The districts blended teams, received riddles and clues then hit the road to steer toward multiple destinations.

The training incorporated driving tasks that may not be required every day, but which should be practiced to strengthen their skills. The drivers and attendants reported back to receive clue words. They were instructed to indicate hazards they encountered on their drives. Attendants are an extra set of eyes and ears on the bus; although they're not driving, attendants are a vital part of safety. Including this in the hunt kept team members focused and working together.

The teams stopped at six locations, described more than 25 hazards and maneuvered the buses through multiple driving skills. They worked on highway driving, roundabouts, straight line backing, railroad crossings, parallel parking and more.

"This was a great opportunity to build professionalism, positive culture and community for both districts," says Mrs. Kristin Sercu, shared Transportation Supervisor for PVCS and CVCS. "I hope we will have more shared training opportunities."

The day of collaborative professional development concluded with the teams using their words to build the statement "How will I change the world today?" This was a focus for leadership teams at both PVCS and CVCS. The teams ended the scavenger hunt at the CVCS bus garage by enjoying a potluck lunch together.



*A bus driver navigates the roundabout at Route 20 and Route 5 in Fredonia.*



*Transportation employees enjoyed a hearty breakfast before embarking on a work-related scavenger hunt.*



*Bus drivers and attendants from Pine Valley and Cassadaga Valley united for a collaborative day of professional development prior to the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.*

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 25 - 26	Nov 27 - 29	Dec 2 - 5	Dec 4	Dec 11
Early Dismissal - All grade levels	No School - Thanksgiving Recess	Project KNOW Grades: 5, 6, & 8	Picture Retakes - ES, HS, & Senior Formals	HS Chorus/ Band Concert - 7 pm
Dec 20	Dec 23 - Jan 3	Jan 9	Jan 20	Jan 21 - 24
Emergency Go Home Early Drill	No School - Winter Recess	Winter Sports Pictures	No School - Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Regents Exams
Jan 29	Feb 1	Feb 8	Feb 12	Feb 14
No School - Lunar New Year	CCMTA Solo Festival	CCMTA Winter All County	Freshman Orientation - Family Night 6pm	P.S. I Love You Day
Feb 17 - 21	Mar 7	Mar 11	Mar 21	Mar 21 - 22
No School - Mid-Winter Recess	No School - Staff Development	ES Spring Pictures, UPK & Kindergarten Cap & Gown	Honors Breakfast 7:30 am	HS Musical 7 pm
Mar 26	Apr 8 - 9	Apr 10	Apr 10 - 11	Apr 14 - 21
ES Creativity Night Jr & National Honor Soc. Induction 6 and 6:30 pm	Gr. 3-8 ELA State Assessments	Parent/Teacher Conferences 12-4 & 5-8 pm	Early Dismissal - All grade levels	No School - Spring Recess

## Holiday Valley

### Holiday Valley Ski Club Opportunity for PV Families

Pine Valley Central School District is again partnering with Holiday Valley in Ellicottville for winter skiing.

As PVCS is not formally running its ski club in 2024, all families with students ages eight and above can take advantage of ski club pricing at Holiday Valley.

Sign up online at  
[www.holidayvalley.com](http://www.holidayvalley.com)  
with Username: MWpinevalley and  
Password: Ski123.

If you have any questions, contact:  
Jr./Sr. High School Principal Kourtney Almeida at 1-716-988-3276.



Top things a Foster child wants:  
I want food and water. Nice clean clothes.  
Don't hit on me. Clean house. Toothbrush.  
I want love.



Do you think you could give these things to a child? Have you ever thought about being a foster parent but have questions? We'd love to answer them for you.

For more details please contact  
Amanda - Cattaraugus County (716-338-3016)  
or Audra - Chautauqua County (716-661-8212)

CATTARAUGUS AND CHAUTAUQUA COUNTIES  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES



### Road Map to Foster Parent Certification What steps do I need to take to become a certified foster parent?

1. Call the Foster Care Home Finders - Amanda (716) 338-3016 for Cattaraugus County or Audra (716) 661-8212 for Chautauqua County.
2. Attend an Informational Meeting to learn more about the certification process
3. Begin MAPP/GPS training process (we meet once a week for 10 weeks)
4. Start the home study process. Two home consults will need to be completed.
5. Complete background checks on all adult members 18 and older in the household. This includes fingerprinting, SCR (child abuse clearance and justice center clearance).
6. Provide at least 3 references and employment verification
7. Home Finding team meets to review the home study and make approval decisions
8. Complete MAPP/GPS.
9. Certification Process is complete!



## How to Support our Panthers Taking the Polar Plunge

The Unified Sports teams of Pine Valley Central School District are asking for the community's support as it prepares for the Buffalo Polar Plunge to raise money for Special Olympics New York.

The Buffalo Polar Plunge is scheduled Friday, December 6, 2024, at Woodlawn Beach State Park at 4 p.m.; registration begins at 2 p.m.

**Visit:**

[https://events.nyso.org/site/TR/Plunge/POLARPLUNGE?team\\_id=22263&pg=team&fr\\_id=3000](https://events.nyso.org/site/TR/Plunge/POLARPLUNGE?team_id=22263&pg=team&fr_id=3000)

to help Pine Valley CSD reach its fundraising goal or to join the team.

Unified Sports brings together students with and without disabilities, both visible and invisible, to compete cooperatively in varsity-level athletics. It is inspired by a simple principle: Training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding.

Athletes are paired with peer coaches to compete, share strategies, and support one another. Having a sport in common is just one more way that misconceptions and false ideas are swept away.

Pine Valley CSD has offered Unified sports for four years: Unified Bocce in the fall, Unified Bowling in the winter, and Unified Basketball in the spring.

For more information on Unified Sports, visit [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org).

Unified Sports of Pine Valley CSD is thankful to the community for its ongoing support of the program.



## Girls on the Run

We finished up our 4th season of Girls on the Run (GOTR) with the celebratory 5k on November 9, 2024, at Delaware Park in Buffalo, NY. Girls on the Run is a nonprofit program that focuses on building confidence and other important life skills through a research-based curriculum that includes understanding ourselves, valuing relationships and teamwork, and recognizing how we can shape the world at large. Throughout our 8-week program, the girls participated in lessons that covered empathy, decision-making, friendship, emotions, and many more. All the lessons included movement and engagement for all girls. Alongside GOTR we also participated in the Parent Run Club (PRC). All parents of the girls participating in GOTR could join the Parent Run Club. Throughout the GOTR 8-week program, the PRC would help parents train for the 5k. The parents would attend weekly Zoom meetings, submit their steps, and complete a pre/post survey. Parents who joined the PRC were also given a 5k race shirt, 5k race entry, an online healthy cooking class and ingredients, if needed parents received sneakers and a Fitbit, and had opportunities to win weekly gift cards. This was a wonderful opportunity to engage family members to practice alongside their GOTR girl.

**Pine Valley Central School District**  
**South Dayton, NY 14138**  
PV Junior/ Senior High School: 988-3276, PV Elementary: 988-3291  
Website: [www.pval.org/](http://www.pval.org/)

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Shanda DuClon, *Superintendent*  
Paige Cobb, *Director of Sp. Ed. and Curriculum*  
Nicole VerHagen, *Business Executive*  
Kourtney Almeida, *Jr./Sr. High School Principal*  
Brandi Meacham, *Elementary Principal*

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Jeffrey Chase, *President*  
Raymond Hadley  
Josh Howard, *Vice President*  
Terry Howe  
Rose Kruszka  
Christie Lokietek  
William Pekrul  
Lawrence Zollinger

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**BOXHOLDER**  
*Conewango Valley, NY 14726*  
**BOXHOLDER**  
*South Dayton, NY 14138*

## NEW HIRES AT PINE VALLEY



**Mark  
Raetz**

Bus Driver



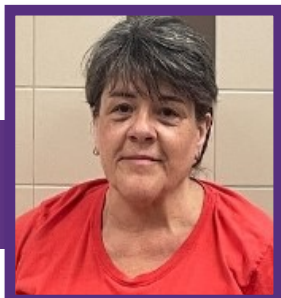
**Christin  
Howard**

Bus Driver



**Jessica  
Klein**

Bus Driver



**Lori  
Baker**

Food Service Helper



**Darlene  
Fisher**

School Bus Attendant



**Christian  
Ambrosioni**

Spanish Teacher

*Welcome our newest Pine Valley Panthers!*