



PIONEER CONNECT

January 2024

PIONEER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, YORKSHIRE, NY

MELISSA PROROK: 1960-2024

Pioneer School District has lost a key member of its family.

Melissa Prorok, principal of Pioneer Middle School, died Jan. 3 following a long battle with cancer.

Ms. Prorok died at home with her family by her side.

She was with Pioneer for 16 years, starting as an assistant middle school principal. She was Pioneer Middle School's "very proud principal" (in her words) for the last 11 years.

Superintendent Nicholas Silvaroli announced Ms. Prorok's death. "Personable, compassionate, and genuine, Melissa had a big heart. She loved people, especially her staff and students, and many will feel the impact of her loss. Melissa fought her illness for many months and always remained optimistic that she would return to Pioneer. She loved and missed her Pioneer family."

Mr. Silvaroli added, "Melissa was also a huge Buffalo Bills fan, and I'm certain she will root for them to 'squish the fish' this Sunday from up above. Like many of you, I will deeply miss her and her kind spirit."

Ms. Prorok is survived by her partner, Kristy, and sons Ethan and Aidan.

A scholarship is being established in memory of Ms. Prorok

Donations are being sought for the scholarship, which is to be awarded this year and perhaps next year.

Kerry Slocum, Arcade Elementary principal and formerly Ms. Prorok's assistant principal at the middle school, is Pioneer's point of contact for the scholarship.

Donations may be sent to: The Melissa Prorok Memorial Scholarship Fund, to benefit Pioneer Schools, c/o Arcade Elementary School, P.O. Box 9 Arcade, NY 14009.



The late Pioneer Middle School Principal Melissa Prorok, center, is shown at the end of the 2021-22 school year with staffers Christie Jones, Betty Zuidema, Cheri Minehan, Kerry Slocum, and Deputy Joe Miller.

CURRICULUM DEPARTMENT NEWS: SAVAAS ENVISION MATH CHOSEN AS EXCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

There's big news from the Pioneer School District Curriculum Department. Our math pilot program for grades K-4 has finished up and the results are in.

After trying out two math programs – McGraw Hill Reveal Math and SAVAAS enVision Math – our teachers voted, and we're super proud to say that SAVAAS enVision Math won!

Starting in the 2024-2025 school year, both Arcade Elementary and Delevan Elementary will use SAVAAS enVision Math as their sole math curriculum. Our teachers worked hard during the four-month pilot, testing both programs to see which worked best.

The majority of teachers preferred SAVAAS enVision Math because it had engaging and interactive lessons. It helps students better understand math

and makes learning fun, connecting to real-world careers and scenarios. The program also has great resources for teachers, and it is aligned with the Next Generation Math Standards and Math Practices for New York State.

We want to give a big shoutout to our teachers for their dedication and enthusiasm during this process. Thanks to them, we're all set to have a successful math experience with SAVAAS enVision Math next school year.

We're looking forward to seeing how SAVAAS enVision Math helps align Math instructional goals and help students succeed to the best of their ability. Thanks, teachers, for making this happen!

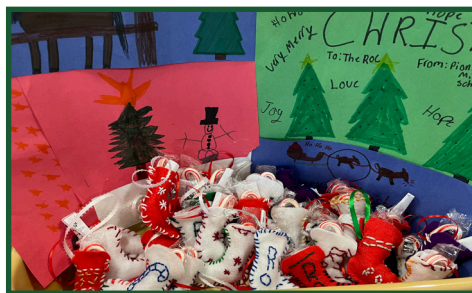
*By Lindsay Simpson,
Pioneer Curriculum Department*

5TH GRADERS SEW STOCKINGS OF HOPE

Fifth grade students in the Pioneer Middle School Family and Consumer Science (FACS) classes of Mrs. Jody Zacaroli recently made holiday stockings for the Rural Outreach Center (ROC).

The ROC is based in East Aurora, providing counseling, care coordination, and support for families and individuals living in rural poverty in Western New York.

Each stocking held a note of hope and encouragement and a little treat. Students used their amazing sewing skills to bring joy to others.



DELEVAN ELEMENTARY HIT BY 'BLAST'

On December 8, Delevan Elementary held its third annual Winter Blast Event. Families had fun making crafts, decorating cookies, playing games, drinking cocoa and visiting with Santa. The night ended with a firetruck parade held by the Delevan Volunteer Fire Department. What a BLAST it was!



HIGH SCHOOL GLOBAL STUDIES NEWS

Pioneer High School 9th Grade Global Studies students recently competed with one another to raise water from a low source to a higher elevation. Teachers added this activity to a lesson on the Hellenistic Golden Age. The winners included Alivia Lefort, Leah Barber, Maddy Souder, Lillyanna Goodemote, and Leah Jorgensen (shown at left below).



Meanwhile, the Cultural Anthropology class read an ethnography earlier this year about the custom of gifting. In the second quarter, students started a unit on Food Anthropology. They learned about the meaning behind gifting food. To turn that into our practice, the class made two batches of Cranberry Sauce to take home to their families. Food is the ingredient that binds us together.



Ashley Bush, Amelia Lemke, Ella Marble



Torri Smith, Mckayla Westfall, Ava May Coonts, Ceena Avery, and Chris Minich

8TH BAND MAKES MOST OF BIG LEAGUE OPPORTUNITY



Pioneer Middle School's 8th grade band, led by Mr. Jared Burch, had the once-in-a-lifetime chance to perform at Key Bank Center in Buffalo prior to the Dec. 11 Sabres game. The band prepared a program of holiday favorites for the event. Families could purchase tickets to the game and attend with students. The good fortune must have rubbed off on the Sabres, as they beat the Arizona Coyotes, 5-2.

BUFFALO BANDITS VISIT DELEVAN

On Dec. 12, Buffalo Bandits professional lacrosse players Bradley McCulley, Chase Fraser, and Cam Wyers visited Delevan Elementary School. During their visit they taught students what lacrosse is and showed them how to score a goal.



WINTERFEST STUDENT ART SHOW: VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE!

The Pioneer Central Art Department is once again putting on an art show of their students' work at the Arcade Historical Society during Winterfest 2024, and you can vote for your favorite artwork/artist. “

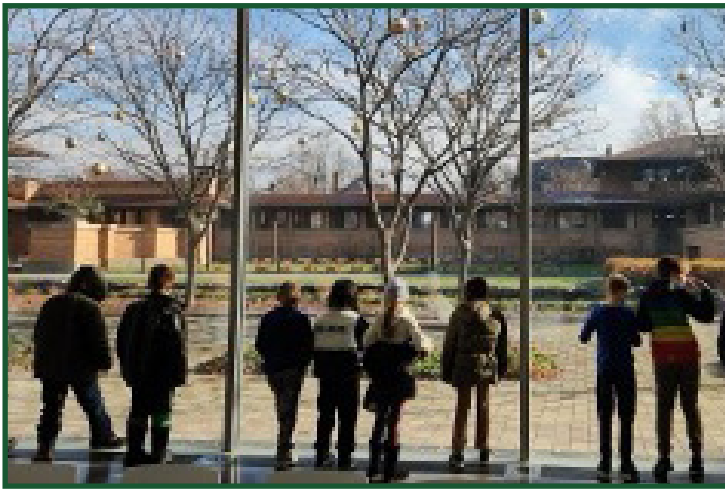
The show is held at the Old Fire Hall, 15 Liberty Street, Arcade, in a spacious hall on the second floor. The building is fully accessible with a ramp and elevator.

The art show will be open on Winterfest Saturday, February 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. If you cannot make it that day, the show will also be open the following Wednesdays in February: 14th, 21st, and 28th from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Voting is open through February 28, with the winners announced on Facebook.



The 2023 student art show at the Old Fire Hall gallery.



4th grade students viewing the exterior of the Darwin Martin House and observing the Prairie style Frank Lloyd Wright used.



Some of the completed art glass pieces on display in the Arcade Elementary 2nd Floor Hallway.

ARCADE STUDENTS TOUR FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT LANDMARKS

While the weather outside is cold and snowy, the Visual Arts classroom at Arcade Elementary School room is heating up and melting.

No, spring isn't here yet. Rather, the 4th grade Art students recently created fused glass artwork with the instruction of Arcade Elementary Art Teacher Allison Minton. Mrs. Minton is a glass artist herself.

The students started their glass-making journey by taking a field trip to Frank Lloyd Wright's Darwin Martin House in Buffalo. While on tour, students learned of the prairie-style architecture founded by Wright and organic designs that were built within the house. They also viewed several art glass windows that were designed and created by Wright. The windows were meant to blend in with the surrounding nature, so when one would look through the windows, the scenery outside blended seamlessly with the art glass designs, providing an organic connection to the artwork and natural world beyond the house walls. Two of the windows that inspired the students' artwork were the Tree of Life Window (c. 1904) and Wisteria Window (c. 1903).

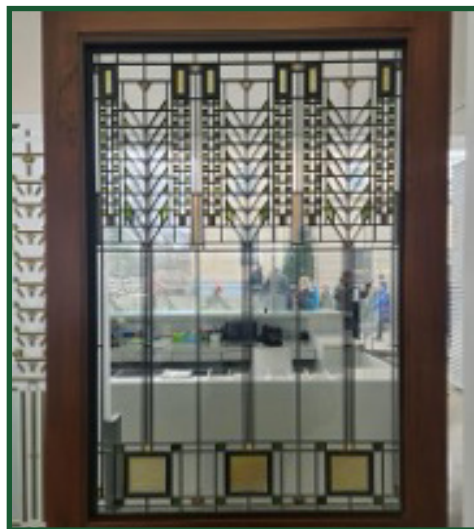
Upon returning to Art class, students began to design their own Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired artwork using straight

lines that echo prairie-style architecture, and building images that connect to nature. Once students finished creating their design on a piece of paper, Mrs. Minton instructed students how to build their glass panel with fused glass pieces to create their own glass artwork.

This amazing opportunity wouldn't have been possible without funding via a grant from the Conable Family Foundation through the Arts Council of Wyoming County, and the Connect Kids to Parks grant from New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historical Preservation.



4th Grade student Havic Albert building his Frank Lloyd Wright inspired panel using really thin pieces of black glass called stringers and noodles.



Interior View of Tree of Life Window by Frank Lloyd Wright.



4th Grader Katie Reynolds, helps fellow student Sydney Beechler by showing her how to squeeze the glass frit (powdered glass mixed with glue) to add color to her glass panel piece.

PIONEER'S FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA (FBLA) GIVE BACK



Pictured are FBLA members Brooklynn Sobczak (left), Sofía Maul, Messina Maul, Makenna Chandler, and Alexa Sobczak

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness month last October, the members of Pioneer's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter designed and sold pink T-shirts.

A check for \$400 was donated to the Breast Cancer Network of Western New York. This organization offers programs, education, and support to those impacted by breast cancer to help from diagnosis through survivorship.

In addition, FBLA also donated \$300 to Ronald McDonald House of Buffalo, which houses families while their children seek medical treatment in Buffalo, and donated \$200 to Pioneer PRO's Giving Tree Program, which helps families in our own communities.

UPK+SANTA=FUN AT SCHOOL

All the hard work put in by our UPK students paid off just before Christmas with a visit from Mr. & Mrs. St. Nick!



ELF RESUMÉ ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS HOLIDAYS

During December, Delevan Elementary School fourth graders were asked by their teachers to write an essay to Santa and explain to him why they would make a good elf. On Dec. 21, students' families were invited to come and have hot cocoa and cookies while the students read their "resumes".



MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSIC VIDEO FEST SHARES ANTI-DRUG MESSAGE

In November, Pioneer Middle School 8th grade Health students celebrated their work with a music video festival. Students collaborated on projects aimed at teaching other students about illicit drugs and the dangers they cause.

Students got to travel to different classrooms to view each other's projects, learn about the drugs, and then vote on a "fan favorite". Teachers also got to partake in voting by choosing a winner in three other categories: most educational, funniest, and most creative. The fan favorite award earned a spot on the Health room's Wall of Fame.

Pictured are this semester's winners:



Funniest: Emma & Isabelle



Most Creative: Charlee & Adreana



Most Educational: Lucas, Tyce, & Gerald



Fan Favorite: Bryce & Jenna

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Richard Spinelli, Acting Middle School Principal
Kerry Slocum, Arcade Elementary Principal
Matthew Langworthy, Delevan Elementary Principal

ECRWSS Postal Patron
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SIXTEEN JOIN NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

The Pioneer Middle School chapter of the National Junior Honor Society has added 16 new members to its roster following induction ceremonies held Nov. 16.

Members were introduced before a gathering of families inside the middle school cafetorium. Acting Principal Richard Spinnelli was the emcee, recognizing the chapter's faculty advisors Rebecca Day and Lori Wyman.

Also on hand for the ceremony was Theresa Kolasny, president of the Pioneer High School chapter of the National Society.

The new members, who were chosen on the basis of their citizenship, service, leadership and scholarship, are:

Owen Bliss, Megan Boldt, Kenna Carmody, Olivia Clayson, Hailey Gilbert, Bryce Higgins, Emma Inthavong, Lucas Kendall, Leighlah Marble Drake, Cassandra Moreira-Rivera, Gioni Stampone, Thomas Stampone, Jacob Staub, Brady Stiles, Mya Wahl, Camryn Wilcox.

