



# The Vestal Town Crier

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Vol. 35 No. 23 NEWSTAND PRICE \$1.00 Friday, January 26, 2024 SUBSCRIBE at [Publisher@TiersNews.com](mailto:Publisher@TiersNews.com)

## Vestal Varsity Boys Lacrosse Golden Bear Midfielder Sammy Baek Signed His National Letter Of Intent To Accept A Scholarship With The Division I U.S. Air Force Academy On January 17

Sammy is the son of Soon and Ann Baek of Vestal. A three-time Under Armor All-American, he is a four-year member of the Varsity Lacrosse team and also played two years of Varsity Soccer with the Golden Bears. He earned spots in the 2022 NYS Lacrosse All-State Fifth Team, 2022-23 NYS Lacrosse Section IV First Team, and 2021 NYS Lacrosse Section IV Second Team.

An Honor Roll student since sixth grade, Sammy plans to study Finance when he joins the Air Force Falcons in the Fall.



**PET OF THE WEEK:**  
**Draco**



Hello I'm Draco! I've been told that I am a rather stately looking fellow. I love to go for a daily walk and then home for a snack and a snooze. Im a happy-all-the-time, glass-half-full kind of dog that needs several tennis balls around me at all times!

**Vestal's Emerald Fire Winter Guard Home Show Will Be Returning To Vestal High School On February 3rd!**  
Article On Page 3

**Vestal Scholars**  
On Page 6!

**VHS Wrestling Senior Night!**  
On Page 8!

**VARSIY BASKETBALL PHOTOS**

On Pages 4 And 5!

**So Long January!**



Photo Credits Go To Kaitlyn Hession

Send in a photo of your pet with a short bio to: [kirsten@tiersnews.com](mailto:kirsten@tiersnews.com) to have your pet in the paper!



# Calendar

**Saturday, January 27th**  
**Family Swim at VHS**  
**12PM - 3PM: open swim**  
**3PM - 4:15PM: lap swim**

**Sunday, January 28th**  
**Mozart Requiem**  
**The Binghamton Philharmonic; 3PM**

**Monday, January 29th**  
**VPL Elementary STEAM**  
**4:45PM; ages 6-11**

**Saturday, February 3rd**  
**Vestal Winter Guard Home Show: Emerald Fire**  
**VHS; 5PM**

**VP CLOSING @ 12 PM**  
**Tuesday, January 23**

VPL will be closing at 12 PM today, Tuesday, January 23, due to inclement weather. We intend to reopen at 9AM Wednesday, January 24. **Stay safe!**

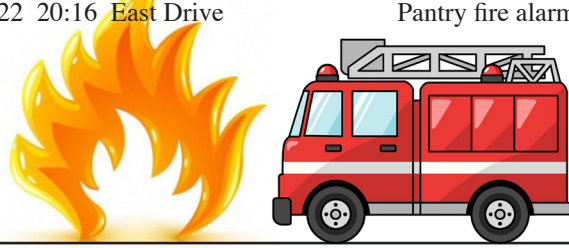


## Vestal Fire Department Responses

vestalfire.com

by Walt Schlundt, Public Information Officer

01/16 03:02	West Access Road	General fire alarm
01/16 12:37	Vestal Parkway E.	Commercial fire alarm from pull station
01/16 16:43	Stonehedge Drive	House fire - limited to one room
01/16 18:47	West Access Road	Fire alarm
01/17 13:35	Vestal Parkway E.	Odor of propane in building
01/17 23:47	Vestal Parkway E.	Fire alarm
01/18 07:17	Vestal Ave. & N. Main St.	Check welfare of man
01/19 16:14	Vestal Parkway E.	Carbon monoxide alarm
01/19 21:56	Skylane Terrace	Mutual aid to Endwell for a house fire
01/20 02:00	East Access Road	Fire alarm
01/20 05:03	Keenan Drive	Garage heat detector activation
01/20 19:15	East Access Road	Lounge fire alarm
01/21 19:23	East Access Road	Lounge fire alarm
01/21 22:51	West Access Road	Fire alarm
01/22 03:29	Vestal Parkway E.	General fire alarm
01/22 10:19	Connector Road	Fire alarm
01/22 20:16	East Drive	Pantry fire alarm



# VESTAL POLICE REPORT

Daniel Raymond Sr., 54, Binghamton arrested for Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Wal-Mart.

Eric Alamo, 36, Brooklyn, arrested for Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Wal-Mart.

Alicia Sivers, 27, Conklin, arrested for Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance 7th Degree for possessing Meth during a traffic stop.

Amber Varney, 35, Greene, arrested for Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Wal-Mart.

Suzanne Rink, 41, Vestal, arrested for Grand Larceny 4th Degree and Reckless Endangerment 2nd Degree for stealing the victim's shotgun and putting the vehicle she was driving in reverse while the victim was reaching inside the vehicle to retrieve his property.

Robert Spoonhower, 37, Berkshire, arrested for Criminal Contempt 2nd Degree for violating a valid full stay away order of protection for being at the residence while the victim was present.

Thomas Burnett, 76, Johnson City arrested for Endangering the Welfare of a Child and Aggravated Harassment 2nd Degree for pushing the victim in the presence of a child during a verbal altercation.

Angela Reich, 31, Vestal, arrested for Petit Larceny, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance 7th Degree and Possession of a Controlled Substance Not in an Original Container for shoplifting from Wal-Mart and possessing a controlled substance that was not in its original bottle.

Alana Gale, 38, Vestal, arrested for Driving While Intoxicated, Driving While Intoxicated-More than .08 BAC and Moved from Lane Unsafely after a motor vehicle accident.

## Winter Activity Ideas!

Winter offers a plethora of enjoyable activities for individuals of all ages.

Embrace the winter wonderland by engaging in classic outdoor activities such as ice skating, sledding, or building snowmen with family and friends. For adventure seekers, try your hand at skiing or snowboarding at a nearby slope.

If you prefer the cozy indoors, gather around a crackling fireplace with loved ones for board games, movie nights, or even a friendly baking competition. Embrace the holiday spirit by attending festive events, such as winter festivals or holiday markets, where you can enjoy seasonal treats and shop for unique gifts.

## Vestal Town Crier

### NEWS/ADVERTISING DEADLINE

The Vestal Town Crier goes to press on Wednesdays. Deadline for news and advertising is the Friday before the desired week of publication.

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Subscription rates to The Vestal Town Crier are \$35 a year in Broome County, \$100 outside of Broome County, and papers are mailed every Thursday from Conklin.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

All letters to the editor are welcomed. All letters must be signed and include the phone number of the writer, to be used for verification of authenticity, not for publication. The editor reserves the right to refuse to publish letters which contain potentially libelous or erroneous statements. Also, letters endorsing political candidates are considered advertisements and should be prepaid as is all political advertising. No letters to the editor regarding political candidates will be accepted.

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dbergerattorney@gmail.com

301 N. Stage Rd., Vestal

# Golden Bears Down Ithaca Little Red

By Hal Ehrhardt

Two weeks ago, Ben Elie competed in the Wolverine Invitational at Waverly in the 11-dive event. He scored the 4th highest 11-dive score in Vestal history with a 432.75 which is more than 130 points above his highest from last year and less than 20 points short of the qualifying score (450) needed for the state championships. He placed 3rd among the 12 divers behind a pair of state qualifying divers. Elie will have at least two more shots at qualifying for states before the season ends.

Last Friday the full team travelled to Ithaca and won for the fourth consecutive year by a final 92-83 score to improve their record to 3-2. As expected, Ithaca's two Top-5 swimmers each won their two individual events, but the Little Red could not outscore Vestal's depth in those events and Vestal won every other individual event. Coach Joe Shore was thrilled with the number of best times turned in by the team after a month of uninterrupted training.

Early in the meet best times dominated for the Golden Bears. A 1-2 sweep of the opening Medley relay was led by a season best from Logan Kim, Adi Banerjee, Ben Hutchings and Ben Elie to set the tone. Best times in the 200 Free by Harrison Cappellett, Lucas Matt and Finn Hynes were key to outscoring Ithaca with a 2-3-4 finish. This finish was matched in the 200 IM by Sayum Singhal, David Cozma and Jayden Kim. Another trio of best times by Elie, Hutchings and Ocean Sun enabled a 1-2-3 sweep of the 50 Free.

Elie won the diving, followed by a 2-3-5 finish by L. Kim, Singhal and Luke Sobel in the Fly. Another 1-2-3 sweep of the 100 Free by Banerjee, Hutchings and Sun nearly put the meet on ice. Cappellett, Matt and Hynes again had career bests with the first two breaking six minutes for the first time in another 2-3-4 finish. Jayden Kim won the backstroke with Ian Chung scoring the final Vestal points of the meet. Banerjee had the fastest 100 Breast in an exhibition swim.

Another key to the meet was the depth shown in the relays as each of the B relays scored key points ensuring that Ithaca wins in the two Free relays could not offset Vestal's point lead. J. Kim, Cozma, Sun and Chung easily outswam the top Ithaca Medley relay to complete the opening 1-2 sweep. Matt, Hynes, Cappellett and Chung completed the 2-3 finish in the 200 Free relay behind Hutchings, Sun, Singhal and Elie. In exhibition swims, the 400 Free relay teams of Singhal, Matt, L. Kim and Banerjee led another 2-3 finish with Cappellett, Hynes, J. Kim and Cozma who broke the minute barrier for the first time.

Plenty of younger Golden Bears turned in their best times in exhibition swims of the 50 Free and 100 Back and 100 Breast as the team knows that only four entries can compete at sectional individual events and each of those spots must be earned in the coming weeks.

## Vestal 92 – Ithaca 83

- Medley Relay: 1st L. Kim, Banerjee, Hutchings, Elie (1:51.28); 2nd J. Kim, Cozma, Sun, Chung;
- 200 Free: 1st Anderson (ITH 1:56.69); 2nd Cappellett (2:07.67); 3rd Matt; 4th Hynes;
- 200 IM: 1st Hwang-Geddes (ITH 2:07.06); 2nd Singhal (2:25.58); 3rd Cozma; 4th J. Kim;
- 50 Free: 1st Elie (24.55); 2nd Hutchings; 3rd Sun;
- Diving (6): 1st Elie (222.90);
- 100 Fly: 1st Hwang-Geddes (ITH 53.80); 2nd L. Kim (59.99); 3rd Singhal; 5th Sobel;
- 100 Free: 1st Banerjee (55.15); 2nd Hutchings; 3rd Sun;
- 500 Free: 1st Anderson (ITH 5:03.75); 2nd Cappellett (5:57.31); Matt; 4th Hynes;
- 200 Free Relay: 1st Ithaca (1:41.06); 2nd Hutchings, Sun, Singhal, Elie (1:43.46); 3rd Matt, Hynes, Cappellett, Chung;

- 100 Back: 1st J. Kim (1:13.21); 5th Chung;
- 100 Breast: 1st Urazgildiev (ITH 1:13.62); EXH: 1st Banerjee (1:11.13); 3rd Cozma, 4th Smith;
- 400 Free Relay: 1st Ithaca (3:49.88); EXH: 2nd Singhal, Matt, L. Kim, Banerjee (4:02.69); 3rd Cappellett, Hynes, J. Kim, Cozma;

This weekend Vestal will participate in the Spartan Invitational at Maine Endwell which is expected to include a dozen local teams. Elie will compete in the 11-dive event starting at 9 AM, while the swimming portion of the meet begins at 1 PM. The Golden Bears will then wrap up their 3-meet stretch against STAC West teams next week when they take on defending Class A co-champion Horseheads on Tuesday, January 30th at 5:30 PM in the Vestal pool. Earlier this week Vestal travelled to Corning (results unavailable), who were recently beaten by the Blue Raiders to again clinch the STAC West title for Horseheads.

## Apalachin Lions Club Scholarships 2024

The Apalachin Lions Club 37th Annual Scholarship program will award \$3000 in scholarships to deserving students from the class of 2024 who live in the 13732, and 13760, 18830 zip codes. This covers Apalachin, Campville east to the Broome County line, and Little Meadows, PA. The scholarships are awarded to students who have made outstanding contributions in service to their community and school.

### Distribution of scholarships will be as follows:

One \$1000 scholarship will be awarded to students who attend Owego Free Academy and Vestal High School. And one \$1000 scholarship will be awarded to a student who attends either of the following schools: Broome Tioga BOCES, Montrose Junior-Senior High, Seton Catholic Central High School, Ross Corners Christian Academy, Northeast Bradford High School and Home Schooling (LEAH).

The distribution of scholarships is based on the relative numbers of students from Apalachin, Campville and Little Meadows attending each of the schools.

Information and applications may be obtained at the schools Guidance Office, or Vestal LEAH. Please return the complete application to the Guidance office or Vestal LEAH on or before: March 27, 2024



## “Vestal’s Emerald Fire Winter Guard Home Show” Continued From Page 1

By Kaitlyn Hession

The VHS Winter Guard team are back and better than ever as they host this year's show. The school has been hosting their annual show since before the new millennium with members of the Mid-York Color Guard Circuit and have been going strong ever since. This year, the girls will be facing a variety of schools and independent groups from around the Southern Tier, Finger Lakes Region, and more. These schools and groups include Lawerance, Union Endicott, Norwich, Corning, Horseheads, Liverpool, West Genesee, Introspection Independent Winter Guard, DARE Winter Guard, and a Color Guard group based out of Owego. This will be the first time Vestal will be hosting Lawerance and West Genesee. Throughout the show, teams will be giving it their all as they perform their routines for a panel of judges. These judges will be observing each contestant in different categories like General Effect, Movement, Equip-

## One of Binghamton's Oldest Residence Halls Becomes The Newest

By Brandon Dyer and Courtesy of Binghamton University

Old Rafuse Hall is one of the original residential buildings constructed on campus in 1958 as part of Dickinson Community. As the fully remodeled residence hall re-opens its doors to residents with the start of the spring 2024 semester, Old Rafuse provides exciting opportunities for new first-year and transfer students.

“I’m really excited that we have a building with new students arriving mid-year who can build community with each other as they are all new and going through the same experience together,” said Amy Pollock Drake, senior associate director of residential life. “It’s even better that the building is newly renovated and joining the Dickinson community.”

Transitioning into college life mid-academic year can be rewarding and challenging. Old Rafuse gives this semester's cohort of new students the opportunity to live together, learn together, make new friends, and share their experiences. Old Rafuse Hall houses 152 residents in double rooms off a shared corridor. The traditional community style bathrooms were reconfigured to provide students with private bathrooms. Additionally, the building boasts an updated lounge with new modern furniture as well as a brand new community kitchen.

“The building has been completely brought up to speed and has been completely updated to be a modern residence offering all new finishes,” said Ryan Roosa, associate director of residential life for operations and project management. Updates include new furnishings, flooring and Wi-Fi connectivity. Exterior work included new sidewalks, loading dock, a new parking lot configuration and landscaping.

Despite the fact Old Rafuse is one of the original residence halls on campus, the interiors are comparable to any other building on campus.

“Everything within the building is new and state of the art,” said Roosa. “We did not sacrifice any quality or care in renovating the building. It still maintains the same standard and features that we have across our campus — while also maintaining some of our history.”

The project included asbestos abatement, minor building demo, construction of new corridor walls, full replacement of mechanical systems and plumbing systems and installation of new windows, doors and lighting along with new paint and finishes.

ment, and Time. At the end of the night, the scores will be tallied and the groups will be placed in the classes they are competing in. The Vestal High School Winter Guard team have been practicing their routine since November for the various shows they take part in throughout the season, including Emerald Fire. It all leads up to the championship show that will take place in April. “All of this is very rewarding because you see your growth all throughout the season.” said Genessis Nwugwo, a Senior at VHS, “By the end you can see how much you’ve improved from your first time to now. It’s my favorite thing!” The Emerald Fire Winter Guard Home Show will take place at Vestal High School on February 3rd at 5pm. Tickets are \$10 for general admission, \$8 for Seniors/Students, and Children under 5 are free.

# VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL VS M.E.

Photos Courtesy Of Maryesther WhiteBrink



#14 Gabriela Kwiatkowski

Home	00	Guests	26
54	00	26	
	period	3	

Score at the beginning of the 4th quarter



Defense!



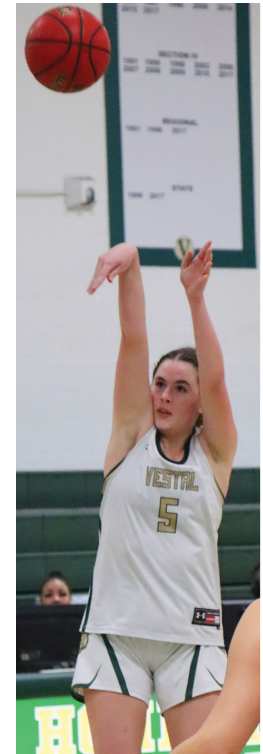
#12 Caroline Reyen



#22 Kayleise Spivey



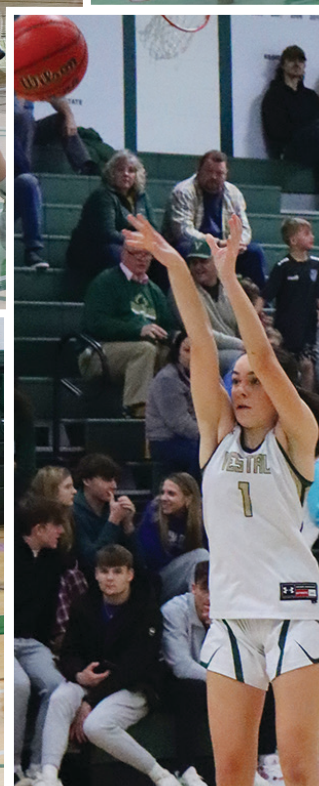
#1 Tedessa DiRenzo



#4 Haley Carrey



#5 Kate Reyen





#23 Dominic Akers



#3 Joseph Dantuono



#0 Xavier Shuler



#2 Liam Nealy



#10 Jace Gannon



#1 JT Gannon



#24 Andrew Harris



#12 Ramiah Hodge



# VHS Boys Varsity Basketball vs U.E.



Giving Thanks to the Veterans



# How to Prune and Protect Your Trees Right

By Christina McLaughlin



## A Note About Oaks

All oaks require special pruning precautions due to the risk of spreading oak wilt, a deadly fungal disease that can be carried and spread by otherwise harmless beetles. These beetles are attracted to tree wounds and can find an injured tree in as little as 10 to 30 minutes.

If you have an oak that could benefit from pruning, plan to prune it between October and mid-March, when the beetles that carry oak wilt are not active. If an oak is wounded in spring or summer and pruning cannot wait, you should treat the pruning wound with a thin coating of paint—any kind will do. Covering the pruning wound with paint will slow recovery, but it will also prevent the oak wilt fungus from entering the tree. You can learn more about oak wilt and how to recognize it at [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/46919.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/46919.html).

diameter) involves three cuts: two to remove the weight of the branch and then a final cut, shown in the diagram.

**Cut 1:** Make a cut on the underside of the branch, a little way up from the branch collar and bark ridge. This cut prevents the bark from ripping when removing the limb.

**Cut 2:** Make a cut on the top of the limb, cutting down towards Cut 1 until the limb is removed.

**Cut 3:** Cut off the stub you've created. Start cutting just outside the branch bark ridge and angle down and slightly away from the stem to avoid damaging the branch bark collar.

Pruning branches is a little like Goldilocks, in that you don't want to take too much or too little, but just the right amount. If you take too much and cut the branch flush to the stem (flush cuts), you will damage the bark ridge and branch collar, and leave a larger wound; this will drastically limit the tree's ability to heal itself. Keeping the bark ridge and branch collar intact will improve the tree's ability to heal.

Alternatively, if you take too little and leave a branch stub, it can allow decay to enter into the wound, causing it to heal more slowly, and can encourage the tree to attempt to grow new small branches from the stub. These epicormic sprouts will look like they are attached by suckers and will have a weak union to the stub, making them prone to fail.

If you are pruning many branches, try not to remove more than 25 percent of the tree's living crown at once. Remember, trees need their branches and leaves for photosynthesis, and removing branches reduces the total amount of leaves a tree has, thus reducing the amount of food it can obtain until its leaves regrow. If you need to prune a lot of a mature tree, take small amounts over several years. Smaller cuts are better than larger cuts. And if in doubt, contact an arborist for help.

Trees provide many benefits, and it's important to keep them healthy. Pruning done right can help protect your trees and ensure they will provide beauty and other benefits for a long time.

If you need help determining when you need an arborist, or finding one when you do, visit DEC's website "Caring for urban trees" [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/120460.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/120460.html).

If you want more details on when to prune a tree and how to do it properly, you can download the "How to Prune Trees" brochure from the U.S. Forest Service here: [www.fs.usda.gov/naspf/sites/default/files/publications/h-tp-runerev2012.pdf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/naspf/sites/default/files/publications/h-tp-runerev2012.pdf).

Did you know that there is a right way to prune a tree? Pruning a tree isn't quite like cutting your friends hair—if you cut your friends hair badly, it'll grow back, and they'll forgive you eventually. But if you prune a tree incorrectly, you can create a wound that will weaken and may eventually kill your tree.

Trees are living organisms, and you can think of their bark like your skin. Bark protects the tree from insects and disease, and an injury to the bark creates a wound. These wounds can heal, but sometimes they allow disease and decay to enter the tree and weaken it over time.

Maintenance pruning is best done on young trees, where branch wounds left behind are small enough that the tree can easily heal. In mature trees, removing limbs larger than four inches in diameter is not recommended—the resulting wounds are frequently too large for the tree to heal.

If your tree has a lot of damage, dead wood, signs of insect infestation (especially ants or boring beetles), decay, or mushrooms and fungus, you should call a certified arborist for help. Think of arborists as "tree doctors"

who can evaluate the health of your tree and give you recommendations for its proper care. Their expertise can be a valuable resource for both you and your tree.

Before starting any pruning yourself, make sure it is safe to do so. Check the tree for hanging branches up in

the canopy that could fall while you are working. If the pruning you want to do can't be done from ground level, or involves a chainsaw, we recommend contacting a tree-care professional.

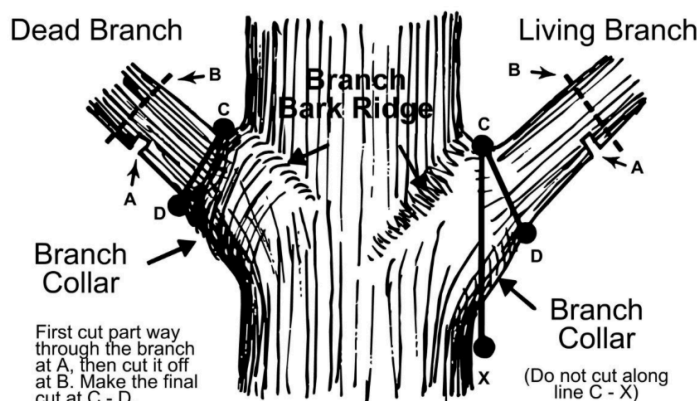
Pruning in late winter and early spring minimizes die-back of the inner bark and helps the wound-healing process. Pruning cuts can dry out some in winter due to low humidity, so waiting to cut a damaged limb until late winter or early spring can improve the tree's healing process.

To prune properly, you must first identify the tree's branch bark ridge and branch collar (see accompanying photo). Find the point where the branch meets the stem. As the branch and the stem have grown, the bark has been pushed up into a ridge; this is the branch bark ridge. The branch collar is the underside of the ridge, a slightly raised part where the stem and branch meet. The goal of pruning successfully is to remove the branch without damaging any of the stem tissue.

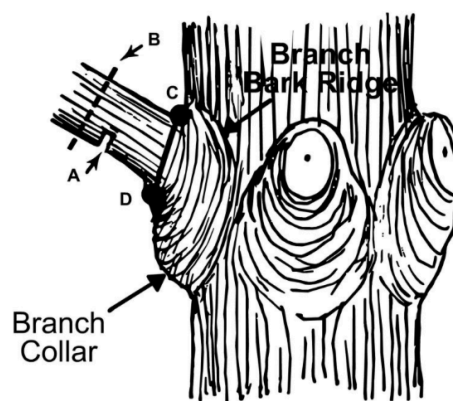
If you can't find the branch collar, the joint may not have formed properly and, instead, it makes more of a V-shape as the branch presses into the stem. When the branch collar is not apparent, the pruning cut should be made without cutting into the bark ridge or leaving a stub.

Proper pruning of a mid-sized limb (1 to 4 inches in

## Proper Pruning Principles



Hardwoods



Conifers

# Vestal Scholars

## Vestal Alumni Named to President's List

SUNY Canton

Nicholas Tomaka of Vestal

Commonwealth University

Samantha Schaffer, of Vestal

## Vestal Alumni Named to Fall 2023 Dean's List

Nazareth University

Sophia Miller of Vestal, NY

Avery Tanton of Vestal, NY

Lillian Hampp of Apalachin, NY

Audra Mieczkowski of Vestal, NY

Gregory Brin of Vestal, NY

Commonwealth University

Ashleigh Allen, of Apalachin, NY

Shannon Perlungher, of Vestal, NY

## Other Honors Received by Vestal Alumni

SUNY Canton recognizes Samuel Leslie, a SUNY Canton Emergency Management major from Vestal, NY (13850) for earning Part-Time Honors during the fall 2023 semester.

Ariana Kline of Vestal, NY, earned Provost's List honors for the fall 2023 semester. Stone is studying Early Child/Childhood Education (B-6) at SUNY Oneonta. Provost's List, means a perfect 4.0 grade-point average while carrying a full-time course load.

# DEC and NYSERDA Release Draft Disadvantaged Communities

## Investments and Benefits Reporting Guidance for New York State Entities

Interagency Guidance Supports Implementation of Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act Equity and Justice Requirements

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) today released draft guidance for State entities to inform the investments and benefits reporting on compliance with the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act's (Climate Act) requirement that a minimum of 35 percent, with a goal of 40 percent, of the State's clean energy investments benefit disadvantaged communities. The draft Disadvantaged Communities Investments and Benefits Reporting Guidance is a blueprint for reporting energy efficiency and clean energy programmatic investments by State entities in disadvantaged communities and will advance consistency and transparency in complying with the Climate Act's equity provisions.

DEC Commissioner and Climate Action Council Co-Chair Basil Seggos said, "New York's Climate Act prioritizes advancing equity and inclusion through the implementation of programs and investments. The draft Disadvantaged Communities Investments and Benefits Guidance released today is the latest step in the State's sustained efforts to ensure all communities, but especially disadvantaged communities, benefit from the State's climate investments and the opportunities created by the state's transition to cleaner energy. DEC and our State partners are advancing comprehensive efforts to reduce climate pollution, create new green jobs, and build stronger, healthier communities, and I encourage New Yorkers to review and comment on the draft guidance to help ensure the State's investments succeed in removing barriers and promoting climate justice."

NYSERDA President and CEO and Climate Action Council Co-Chair Doreen M. Harris said, "This guidance is critical to helping NYSERDA and our partner agencies take the necessary steps to design and implement programs that demonstrate direct benefits to New York's most underserved communities. We welcome input from New

Yorkers on this draft guidance so that, together, we can advance a clean energy future that maximizes accountability, advances climate justice, and stimulates economic development that allows all New York communities to prosper."

Developed in collaboration with a number of New York State agencies and authorities, the draft guidance, when finalized, will provide the information state entities need to comply with the Climate Act's equity mandate and account for energy efficiency and clean energy program investments in disadvantaged communities as defined and finalized by the Climate Justice Working Group (CJWG) in March 2023. This will help ensure that disadvantaged communities receive a minimum of 35 percent, with a goal of 40 percent, of the overall benefits of the state's clean energy and energy efficiency programs, projects, or investments in the areas of housing, workforce development, pollution reduction, low-income energy assistance, renewable energy, transportation, and economic development.

All New Yorkers are welcome to provide input on how the state tracks progress toward addressing the interests and priorities of historically marginalized communities as the state continues to transition to an inclusive clean energy economy that reduces pollution, addresses systemic inequities, and expands economic opportunity for all New Yorkers.

An overview of the draft guidance was presented to the CJWG on November 14, 2023, and is now available for a public comment period.

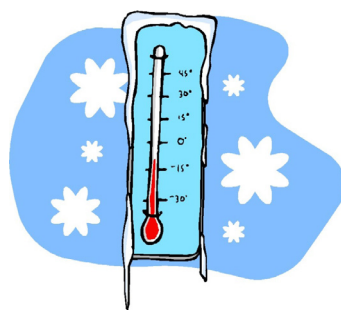
Written comments on the proposed guidance may be submitted until close of business February 23, 2024. Contact: Alanah Keddell-Tuckey, NYSDEC - Office of Environmental Justice, 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233-1550 or email [justice@dec.ny.gov](mailto:justice@dec.ny.gov). Include "Draft Disadvantaged Communities Reporting Guidance" in the subject line of the email.

A public information session will be scheduled to allow for additional stakeholder engagement before the draft guidance is finalized. For more information about New York's climate efforts, visit the Climate Act website.

### New York State's Nation-Leading Climate Plan

New York State's nation-leading climate agenda calls for an orderly and just transition that creates family-sustaining jobs, continues to foster a green economy across all sectors and ensures that at least 35 percent, with a goal of 40 percent, of the benefits of clean energy investments are directed to disadvantaged communities. Guided by some of the nation's most aggressive climate and clean energy initiatives, New York is on a path to achieving a zero-emission electricity sector by 2040, including 70 percent renewable energy generation by 2030, and economy-wide carbon neutrality by mid-century. A cornerstone of this transition is New York's unprecedented clean energy investments, including more than \$50 billion in 66 large-scale renewable and transmission projects across the state, \$6.8 billion to reduce building emissions, \$3.3 billion to scale up solar, nearly \$3 billion for clean transportation initiatives, and over \$2 billion in NY Green Bank commitments. These and other investments are supporting more than 170,000 jobs in New York's clean energy sector in 2022 and over 3,000 percent growth in the distributed solar sector since 2011. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality, New York also adopted zero-emission vehicle regulations, including requiring all new passenger cars and light-duty trucks sold in the State be zero emission by 2035. Partnerships are continuing to advance New York's climate action with nearly 400 registered and more than 100 certified Climate Smart Communities, nearly 500 Clean Energy Communities, and the State's largest community air monitoring initiative in 10 disadvantaged communities across the state to help target air pollution and combat climate change.

## Prevent Your Pipes From Freezing As Colder Air Sweeps In



As colder temperatures approach, homeowners should be mindful of the risks associated with pipes freezing.

Jeff Wickman, Territory Manager of Artic Bear Plumbing, Heating & Air, warns that pipes in homes can freeze if the temperature inside the house drops below freezing, especially in homes without adequate heating. One common mistake to avoid is adjusting the thermostat significantly when not at home, as this can have adverse effects.

Wickman advises keeping garage doors closed as much as possible to minimize temperature fluctuations caused by cars going in and out. If parking outside is more convenient, it's recommended. Additionally, opening cabinet doors during extremely cold weather and maintaining a slow drip of cold water can help prevent pipes from freezing by keeping the water in motion.

## The Department of Environmental Conservation Provides Guidance On Bear Encounters During Winter



While bears are more commonly spotted during the summer months, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) emphasizes that bear encounters

can also occur in winter. Unlike many animals, bears' hibernation patterns are driven by food supply rather than outdoor temperatures, according to DEC Big Game Biologist Courtney LaMere.

LaMere clarified, Bears don't truly hibernate. Their body temperature barely drops while they're sleeping in the wintertime, so it's pretty easy for them to wake up. In the event of a bear encounter during this season, individuals are advised to follow the same protocols as they would during bear season.

Although bears may appear slower during winter, LaMere recommends employing the same strategies if one encounters a bear in their backyard, such as opening a window, making loud noises, or banging pots and pans together. Leaving a bird feeder in the yard can attract bears, as their winter diet often includes small food items like

ants. Therefore, the DEC advises people to put away bird feeders in the case of a bear encounter.

LaMere mentioned they tell people that it's safe to feed birds this time of year because bears are in hibernation, but that's not always the case. If you have a bear that's visiting your yard, you have to take your bird feeders down until the bear leaves, hopefully in the next few weeks.

The DEC recommends that individuals encountering bears at any time contact its office in Cortland, NY, as they can monitor potential bear hotspots throughout New York State.

### FUN FACTS!

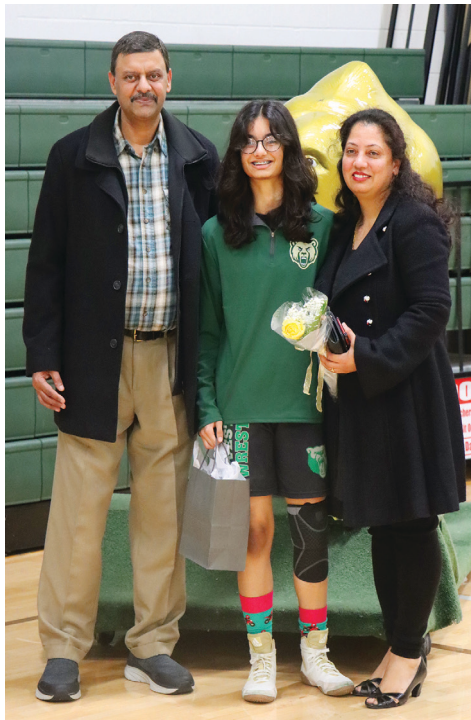
1. The name for the shape of Pringles is called a "Hyperbolic Paraboloid."
2. Even though Froot Loops are different colors, they all have exactly the same flavor. They have different scents that give the illusion of different flavors.
3. Alligators will give manatees the right of way if they are swimming near each other.
4. Researchers found fossils of a "Mega Penguin" that stood over 6 feet tall and weighed in at over 250 pounds.

# VHS Wrestling Senior Night!

Photos Courtesy Of Maryesther WhiteBrink



Braden McMahon



Dania Sodhi



Sea Yosanakatanyu



Donovan Donlin

# THE FATHER DAUGHTER BALL

**Saturday, February 10th, 2024**

**5:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**The Doubletree by Hilton, 225 Water Street, Binghamton, NY**

Fathers and daughters, join us for a wonderful evening of dinner and dancing. The buffet will include flank steak, breaded chicken fingers, gourmet macaroni and cheese, garlic mashed potatoes, glazed baby carrots, salad, cookies, and brownies.

All seating is assigned and tables will hold a maximum of ten. We will do our best to honor seating requests. Complete tables of ten are guaranteed.

List all the names of the adults and children that you wish to be seated with on the registration form under "table requests". If you do not have a seating preference, leave it blank and we will seat you with another family.

All ages are welcome. **Open to Town of Vestal and Apalachin residents only.**

**Cost for Vestal residents: \$50.00 adults, \$35.00 daughters**

**Cost for Apalachin residents: \$60.00 adults, \$45.00 daughters (non-resident fee).**

**Deadline to register: Friday, January 26th at 4:30 pm, unless it fills earlier.**

