



# The Vestal Town Crier

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Vol. 35 No. 49 NEWSTAND PRICE \$1.00 Friday, July 26, 2024 SUBSCRIBE at [Publisher@TiersNews.com](mailto:Publisher@TiersNews.com)



## Vestal Business Students Receive Honor at National FBLA Competition



Eleven students just returned from the Orlando National FBLA Competition. Inaaya Sethi won 8th place in the country and worldwide in Advertising. This is not an easy accomplishment. Each student must compete on our local competition and place 1st-2nd. Then they have to compete in NYS level and place 1st-3rd. So, at the National level they are competing against the top of each state and several other countries.

We also had 2 Vestal students that took Introduction to Business at Vestal this year and studied units in Business Ethics and AI. They entered a Fundamentals of Ethics A\*S\*K Certification Exam using their knowledge from our Vestal class to see if they could be Nationally Certified in Business Ethics. This Exam demonstrates their understanding of the skills and knowledge demanded by employers and important for success in the business world.

Both students Inaaya Sethi and Wassim Hila both passed with Exemplary level-5 which is the highest level possible!

At the end of the trip, Ms. Mezzadonna was presented with the plaque. Congratulations!!



## “Vestal CSD Leaders Discuss Student Cell Phones and Devices’ Impact on Education on NYSSBA Podcast

Edited into text by Newspaper Publishers”

On Pages 9 and 10; excerpts below:

“Smart phones have changed the way we communicate and receive information, but having access to this technology has created challenges and distractions for students.

The allure of social media notifications, text messages and endless digital entertainment options often

proves too potent for students to resist, leading to diminished focus, disrupted learning environments and a decline in academic performance.”

“It’s not only our high school, but it’s prevalent in our middle school and even creeping into our elemen-

tary buildings...We needed to do something to investigate this.”

“[What we have found is] the number one remedy they’re saying is cell phones out of the classroom. How do we do that? We’re looking at different possibilities.”



Attention drivers:  
Hazel Rd off of  
Route 26 in Vestal  
will be closed  
until August 18th.

“Vestal Youth  
Police Academy”  
On Page 8!



PET OF  
THE WEEK:

Cloe



Hi I'm Cloe! I may look tough but I'm a very sensitive and gentle girl. I love to cuddle with everyone and everything, especially my stuffed elephant. I am shy at first but I'm a very friendly pup!



“Vestal Fire Does Demonstration For Vestal Youth Police Academy” Page 11!

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!





# Vestal CALENDAR

Friday, July 26th

Butterfly Release With Winterberry Farms  
1:30PM- 3PM, VPL Reading Garden

Saturday, July 27th

Yoga To Be Kitten Me!- Kitten Yoga  
Open Kitten Meet & Greet: 10AM- 12PM,  
Kitten Yoga: 1PM- 2PM, VPL Meeting Room,  
Registration Required!, Sign Up Online

Monday, July 29th

VPL Little Learners: Ready to Learn  
Ages 0-5, 10AM- 11:30AM & 4PM- 5:30PM

Tuesday, July 30th

>Java Joe Jammers- Live Music  
6PM, VPL Meeting Room  
>Mason Warrington Orchestra  
Vestal Gazebo, Four Corners,  
Front St. & Main St., 7PM  
>VPL Reader's Theater Session 2  
Ages 6-11, 1:30PM- 3PM

Wednesday, July 31st

VPL Elementary STEAM: Sharpie Tie-Dye  
Ages 5-11, 1PM- 2PM & 6PM- 7PM

Thursday, August 1st

>VPL Park Storytime  
All Ages, 10:30AM  
>VPL Movie & Trail Mix Bar  
5:30PM, Ages 12-18  
>VCB Summer Concert  
6:30PM, Arnold Park  
>Free Bowling with the Police Department  
12PM- 5PM, Ages 5-17, Midway Lanes

Monday, August 5th

VPL Little Learners: Music & Dance Party  
Ages 0-5, 10AM- 11:30AM & 4PM- 5:30PM

Tuesday, August 6th

>Brothers and Friends Concert  
Vestal Gazebo, Four Corners,  
Front St. & Main St., 7PM  
>VPL Reader's Theater Session 3  
1:30PM- 3PM, Ages 6-11

Wednesday, August 7th

>Vestal Recreation Summer Celebration  
5PM - 8PM, Arnold Park  
>VPL Elementary STEAM: Constellation Jars  
Ages 5-11, 1PM- 2PM & 6PM- 7PM



## Vestal Fire Department Responses

vestalfire.com

by Walt Schlundt, Public Information Officer

**Vestal Fire this week responded to:  
5 fire alarms, 5 carbon monoxide  
alarms, 3 smoke alarms, 1 gasoline leak,  
1 elevator rescue, 1 water rescue, 1 possible  
house fire, and 1 collapsed pool**

07/16 14:39 Virginia Avenue	Pool collapsed - male with injuries
07/17 15:01 Vestal Road	Carbon monoxide alarm
07/17 15:07 Route 201	Possible water rescue
07/17 17:56 West Drive	Elevator rescue
07/17 19:48 W. Marshall Drive	Carbon monoxide alarm
07/18 09:06 Route 26	Possible house fire
- smoke seen in living room	
07/18 10:42 Murray Hill Road	Auto fire alarm from keypad
07/18 10:53 Mirador Road	Gasoline leaking in garage - heavy odor
07/18 20:05 Foster Road	Residential fire alarm - keypad activation
07/19 07:45 Front Street	Commercial smoke alarm
07/19 14:58 Front Street	Commercial smoke alarm
07/19 21:46 Glenwood Road	Carbon monoxide alarm
07/19 22:17 Front Street	Commercial smoke alarm
07/21 08:48 Vestal Parkway W.	General fire alarm
07/21 08:52 Vestal Road	Commercial fire alarm - fire panel
07/21 08:53 Vestal Road	Carbon monoxide alarm
07/22 11:12 Birch Street	Carbon monoxide alarm
07/22 16:43 Vestal Parkway E.	Fire alarm

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dbergerattorney@gmail.com    301 N. Stage Rd., Vestal

# VESTAL POLICE REPORT

Garrett Swan, 24, Dover, New Hampshire, arrested for Driving While Intoxicated, Driving While Intoxicated-More than .08 BAC, Aggravated Driving While Intoxicated-More than .18 BAC and Moved from Lane Unsafely after a motor vehicle accident.

Lisa Conlon, 41, Binghamton, arrested for Driving While Ability Impaired by Drugs (Felony), Suspended Registration, Vehicle Interlock violation, Unlicensed Operator, Unregistered Motor Vehicle, Criminal Impersonation 2nd Degree, Criminal Use of Drug Paraphernalia and two counts of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance 7th Degree for giving a false name when arrested, and possessing a digital scale, a controlled substance and Meth during a traffic stop.

Brandy Muckey, 34, Vestal, arrested for Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Wal-Mart.

Myasia Williams, 28, Binghamton, arrested for Bail Jumping 3rd Degree for failing to appear in court on a scheduled court date or within 30 days thereafter.

Ryan Krause, 30, Binghamton, arrested for Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Lowe's.

Robert Palczynski, 51, Binghamton, arrested for two counts of Petit Larceny, Endangering the Welfare of a Child, Criminal Possession of Stolen Property 5th Degree for shoplifting from Best Buy in the presence of a child and possessing previously stolen Best Buy property.

Jose Navarrete, 49, Endicott, arrested for Driving While Intoxicated, Speed in Zone and Failed to Stop When Entering Roadway from an Alley or Driveway after a traffic stop.

John Hillard, 53, Binghamton, arrested for Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Wal-Mart.

Cassandra Geiggar, 56, Vestal, arrested for Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Wal-Mart.

Cara Pascucci, 56, Johnson City, arrested for Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Wal-Mart.

Alikunta Griggs, 40, Binghamton, arrested for two counts of Petit Larceny for shoplifting from Wal-Mart on two dates and Resisting Arrest for running from patrols who were trying to arrest him.

Anthony Miller, 28, Binghamton, arrested for Driving While Ability Impaired by Drugs, Driving While Intoxicated, Aggravated Unlicensed Operation 1st Degree and Speed in Zone after a traffic stop.

Kevin Spencer, 49, Binghamton, arrested for Driving While Intoxicated (Felony), Aggravated Unlicensed Operation 1st Degree, Unlicensed Operator, Moved from Lane Unsafely, Failed to Keep Right, Consumption of Alcohol in a Motor Vehicle and refusal of breath test after a traffic stop.





# Recognizing and Responding to Heat Stress, Heat Exhaustion, and Heat Stroke in Pets

As temperatures rise, pets become vulnerable to heat-related illnesses such as heat stress, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Recognizing the signs and knowing how to respond can save your pet's life.

## Signs of Heat Stress in Pets

Heat stress is the initial stage of heat-related illness and can progress if not addressed. Signs include:

- Panting: Increased and heavy panting.
- Drooling: Excessive salivation.
- Restlessness: Difficulty finding a comfortable spot to cool down.
- Red or pale gums: Indicating increased heart rate and circulatory stress.
- Increased heart rate: Faster than normal pulse.

### What to Do:

- Move your pet to a cool, shaded area immediately.
- Offer small amounts of cool (not cold) water.
- Use a fan or wet towels to help cool your pet.
- Monitor their condition closely.

## Signs of Heat Exhaustion in Pets

Heat exhaustion is more serious and can develop from untreated heat stress. Symptoms include:

- Weakness and lethargy: Noticeable drop in energy and alertness.
- Vomiting and diarrhea: Often a sign of distress.
- Heavy panting: More pronounced and rapid.
- Incoordination: Stumbling or difficulty walking.
- Dehydration: Dry nose and gums, loss of skin elasticity.

### What to Do:

- Move your pet to a cooler environment.
- Offer water and encourage drinking small amounts.
- Apply cool, wet cloths UNDER their body, focusing on the neck, armpits, and groin. (Placing wet cloths on top of their bodies can trap heat underneath!)
- Avoid ice or extremely cold water, which can shock their system.
- Contact your veterinarian for further advice.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

We have been receiving letters and reviews of the changes to the Vestal Town Crier, we will post them here without names listed. The absence of names has a long history in American Reporting, up until the early to mid 1970's. We do so to protect our sources.

WE APPRECIATE ALL STORY TIPS AS WELL  
EMAIL TO: News@TiersNews.com

## Signs of Heat Stroke in Pets

Heat stroke is a medical emergency that can be fatal. Symptoms include:

- Confusion or disorientation: Appears dazed or unresponsive.
- Seizures or collapse: Can indicate severe overheating.
- Bright red or blue gums: Severe circulatory distress.
- Rapid heart rate: Often irregular and very fast.
- Loss of consciousness: A critical sign needing immediate action.

### What to Do:

- Move your pet to a cool area immediately.
- Apply cool (not cold) water to their body, particularly the head, neck, and chest.
- Use a fan to increase evaporation and cooling.
- Avoid ice or very cold water to prevent shock.
- Seek veterinary care immediately; heat stroke requires urgent treatment.

## Preventing Heat-Related Illnesses

Prevention is key to protecting your pets from heat stress, exhaustion, and stroke:

- Avoid the heat: Keep pets indoors during peak temperatures.
- Provide shade and water: Always ensure access to fresh water and shaded areas.
- Limit exercise: Exercise pets during cooler parts of the day.
- Monitor closely: Watch for early signs of heat stress, especially in high-risk breeds.

By recognizing the signs and taking prompt action, you can help ensure your pet stays safe and healthy during hot weather.

## FUN FACTS

1. The oldest person ever to have lived (whose age could be authenticated), a French woman named Jeanne Louise Calment, was 122 years old when she died in 1997.
2. John Montagu, who lived in the 1700s, reportedly invented the sandwich so he wouldn't have to leave his gambling table to eat.
3. The heart of the blue whale, the largest animal on earth, is five feet long and weighs 400 pounds. The whale in total weighs 40,000 pounds.
4. For comparison, an elephant's heart weighs around 30 pounds. And a human heart? A mere 10 ounces.

# Crimewatch Tips

The Town of Vestal Police Department has invested in a community-based website called Crimewatch. This website will keep the public informed of notable arrests, events, warrants and can be used to submit tips, request house watches, register their surveillance cameras and home alarms and file a traffic complaint. This past Saturday morning at approximately 5:30am a tip was submitted to the Crimewatch website. By chance, a member of our administration was awake and saw the tip. That member immediately called the shift supervisor and requested that patrol respond to the location given. An arrest was made as a result of this tip, but we want to encourage the public to use 911 or the nonemergency number (607) 754-2111 to report incidents that are in progress. This will ensure proper documentation and a timely response from our officers. We thank the public for staying vigilant and we appreciate their ongoing support. Please register for Crimewatch to receive updates <https://crimewatch.net/l/245804> or [townofvestalpolice.org](http://townofvestalpolice.org) Join us on Facebook- Vestal Police Department & Twitter- @Vestal\_Police

Sourced via CRIMEWATCH®: <https://crimewatch.net/us/ny/broome/vestal-pd/245804/post/crimewatch-tips>



## Broome County Legislators

Kelly F. Wildoner  
District 3 (Town of Binghamton, Conklin & Vestal)  
[kelly.wildoner@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:kelly.wildoner@broomecountyny.gov)

Stephen J. Flagg  
District 1 (City of Binghamton, Towns of Colesville, Fenton & Kirkwood)  
[stephen.flagg@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:stephen.flagg@broomecountyny.gov)

Scott D. Baker  
District 2 (Towns of Kirkwood, Sanford & Windsor)  
[scott.baker@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:scott.baker@broomecountyny.gov)

Chairman-Daniel J. Reynolds (Dist 5)  
[daniel.j.reynolds@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:daniel.j.reynolds@broomecountyny.gov)

Maj. Leader-Matthew J. Pasquale Dist 7)  
[matthew.pasquale@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:matthew.pasquale@broomecountyny.gov)

Min.w Leader Robert Weslar (Dist 13)  
[bob.weslar@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:bob.weslar@broomecountyny.gov)

## Health & Human Services Committee (OVER VETERANS)

Jason Shaw [jason.shaw@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:jason.shaw@broomecountyny.gov)  
Louis Augostini [louie.augostini@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:louie.augostini@broomecountyny.gov)  
Matthew Hilderbrant [matt.hilderbrant@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:matt.hilderbrant@broomecountyny.gov)  
Kim Myers [kim.myers@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:kim.myers@broomecountyny.gov)  
Mark Whalen [mark.whelen@broomecountyny.gov](mailto:mark.whelen@broomecountyny.gov)

# 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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# Regular Meeting Minutes of the Vestal Town Board

NEWSPAPER EDITED, July 16th, 2024

## TOWN BOARD PRESENT:

- Supervisor Maria Sexton
- Councilwoman Sue Messina
- Councilman Stephen Donnelly
- Councilman Glenn Miller
- Councilman Robert Greene

## ALSO ATTENDING:

Town Clerk Debra Wallace and Director of Human Resources, Debora Panicek

Supervisor Sexton convened the meeting at 12:00 PM.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
3. BID OPENINGS
4. PUBLIC HEARING

## 5. SUPERVISOR UPDATES

## 6. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

## 7. RESOLUTIONS & MOTIONS

## 8. PUBLIC WORKS (DONNELLY/Greene)

## 9. FINANCE (MESSINA/Donnelly)

## 10. PERSONNEL (DONNELLY/Messina)

## 11. PLANNING & ZONING

(MESSINA/Greene)

## 12. PUBLIC SAFETY (MESSINA/Greene)

## 13. ADMINISTRATION (GREENE/Donnelly)

## RECEIVE AND FILE:

## 14. PETITIONS & PROTESTS

## 15. OLD BUSINESS

## 16. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

## 17. SUPERVISORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 18. COMMITTEE CHAIR COMMENTS AND UPDATES

## 19. PUBLIC COMMENTS

On a motion by Councilman Donnelly, seconded by Councilwoman Messina, the Board adjourned the Special Meeting and entered into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing the following:

## FOR THE PURPOSE OF:

- Personnel Museum
- The time was 12:01 PM

## ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councilman Greene, seconded by Councilman Donnelly, the Board adjourned the meeting. The time was 12:50 PM

Approved by Debra Wallace, Town Clerk

# “ALL AMERICAN” PIE & ICE CREAM SOCIALS

At the  
Vestal Center  
United Methodist  
Church

478 West Hill Rd.

\*Friday - August 9th - 6-8PM

\*Friday - September 13th -  
6-8PM

# Vestal High School Student Wins 1st Place and Overall Champion in Computer Game & Simulation Programming at National FBLA Conference

A student from Vestal High School won top prizes at the 2023 National Leadership Conference of Future Business Leaders of America, Inc. (FBLA), the nation's largest Career and Technical Student Organization focused solely on business. The event held June 27 - 30, 2023, in Atlanta, GA, attracted more than 13,000 middle school and high school students and educators from across the country.

Vestal High School is proud to share that these students qualified to compete in the National Competition - Ameet Ashok, Solomon Chen, Daksh Dhamsania, Abhiram Kandanati, Andrew Lee, Rayaan Lodi, and Miron Sulicz. Miron, a rising senior, captured first place in the category of Computer Game & Simulation Programming. He was also crowned the overall champion in this event!

More than 8,700 High School members from nearly 1,600 high schools and more than 850 Middle School members from more than 250 middle schools competed in more

than 100 competitive events over four days. Students also engaged in learning workshops, met with representatives from more than 60 colleges, universities, and employers, and heard from Jordan Davis, an educational speaker and FBLA alumnus, during the opening ceremony.

“Our Vestal High School student members did an exceptional job,” said Vestal HS FBLA advisor Annette Mezzadonna. “They wowed the judges with their keen understanding of areas as diverse as Accounting, Banking and Financial Systems, Communications, Securities and Investments, Political Science, Financial Math and Computer Game & Simulation Programming.”

FBLA President & CEO Alexander T. Graham said. “They headed home with a renewed sense of accomplishment, a robust network of peers from across the country, and connections to colleges and employers as they explore future career opportunities.”

B Q U B K S F Y P K J T X U U E R F H V Q G Y F L G Y P	I U Z H E A N R I K A W B N W L K X B F J N E H Z V O T S Q W Z L U S B C B B A K H I H V I D D R B Y K W G Y F L B H O S W P B K S T U O K O O C V Q I J X Y P Y P A S L A D N A S N N V J S Q Q Z O V Q	P O H E B I N F W K O K H Z A A M V L E V A R T X H E V V M A H I J A O E E V Z R O U T S I D E A N D G C R Y B D U T H R A B E A C H P D L X R I E N D S S K G Q D P C C L I G N I H S I F K I Y A H H Z Z A D O Y E A X T B X O Y M A G P A R A W I N G S S M G G C T X N F L Q I E K P K B N W X A P B A S U S O I I G N I F R U S G C J A W N L J O E T O S T W U O J H S M E W O G Q T R K I X B I L E R E Z S X N H G F M Z N P A U X B F G K P G D N U U A M U S E M E N T P A R K U E J N G D J U U I M W S I N P F L O P L K R B R Q W I A S X T C Z N U F E K F Q V X E H O T R W U Q P L S J M A G N I H G U A L D R J V J V H U E X E L P D P S U N S C R E E N T E B L O O P F N N E E M J I M G A D O P B C I K N U H F X Z H Z V L R I G C O W E K I B T R I D C Y O M I H V O T S B U O N G A R X Y T R A P L O O P O D N Q Y S A M K E I K R A P R E T A W L S D P Q Z E Q W Z L U S B C B B A K H I H V I D D R B Y K W G Y F L B H O S W P B K S T U O K O O C V Q I J X Y P Y P A S L A D N A S N N V J S Q Q Z O V Q	W A T E R M E L O N J D C N D X C T O L F L I P F L O P S M D O B G X L G J M I V L E V A R T X R O U T S I D E A C H P D L X I G N I H S I F B X O Y M A G N I F R U S G C H S M E W O G Q F M Z N P A U M U S E M E N T P A R K P L O P L K R B Q V X E H O T R J V J V H B L O O P B C I K N U H F X Z C Y O M I H P O D N S D P Q Z E D R B Y K W O C V Q I J V J S Q Q Z O V Q	amusementpark sleepingin watermelon parawings waterpark poolparty flipflops sunscreen barbeque dirtbike laughing vacation icecream cookouts umbrella picnics friends fishing surfing hotdogs sandals outside	travel museum bikes beach sand pool hot fun
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YOGA TO BE KITTEN ME!

# KITTEN YOGA

A PURRFECT WAY TO SPEND YOUR DAY



Stretch your paws with adoptable kitties from Every Cat's Dream! Learn mindful poses to improve your flexibility, physical strength, and mental health -- all while socializing with Vestal's most eligible feline friends! Kitten Yoga will take place in the Large Meeting room on Saturday, July 27 with socializing from 10 AM - 12 PM and Yoga from 1 - 2 PM. All are welcome to meet & greet the adoptable kittens and cats. Adoption applications must be pre-approved to bring a kitten home that day. Fill out an application online today!



Registration Required to participate in Yoga. Yoga participants are asked to bring a donation from the Every Cats Dream wish list to participate. Sign up online starting 7/12

## 07.27.2024



ADVENTURE  
— BEGINS AT —  
YOUR LIBRARY.



# VESTAL YOUTH POLICE ACADEMY GRADUATION

CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS



We truly enjoyed getting to know this incredible group of students over the past week. Congratulations on completing the Vestal Youth Police Academy! We hope you come back to join us again next summer! Many thanks to all of the officers and agencies that assisted us over the past week by giving presentations, demonstrations and spending time with our students. NYS Department of Environmental Conservation NYS Troop C Broome County Sheriff's Office Binghamton's National Guard Broome County Metro SWAT This program has gained popularity throughout the county over the past 12 years drawing students in from neighboring school districts making this the largest class ever. SRO's Talbut, Cardarelli, Tuetken and Perez along with Councilwoman Messina dedicated their time and effort to ensure that this group got the most of their time with us. We applaud their efforts and commitment to the program and more importantly, the children.

Sourced via CRIMEWATCH®

## Vestal Public Library Little Learner's Dino-Mite



"Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under the trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the blue sky, is by no means waste of time." — John Lubbock

ADVENTURE BEGINS AT YOUR LIBRARY.

# Little Learners

**SENSORY TIME & ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 0 - 5**

**Mondays at 10AM & 4:30PM**

- Dino-mite!** Monday, July 8  
10 - 11:30AM & 4:30 - 6PM  
Reading Garden Patio
- Color Outside the Lines** Monday, July 15  
10 - 11:30AM & 4:30 - 6PM  
Meeting Room
- Sensory Bin Exploration** Monday, July 22  
10 - 11:30AM & 4:30 - 6PM  
Reading Garden Patio
- Ready, Set, Learn! Early Learning Made Fun!** Monday, July 29  
10 - 11:30AM & 4:30 - 6PM  
Meeting Room
- Twist & Turn Dance Party** Monday, August 5  
10 - 11:30AM & 4:30 - 6PM  
Meeting Room
- Sensory Obstacle Course** Monday, August 12  
10 - 11:30AM & 4:30 - 6PM  
Meeting Room & Patio

no registration required

These learning adventures are designed for our youngest explorers! Our programs offer tailored activities for ages 0-3 and 4-5, including Dino-mite!, Twist & Turn Dance Party, and Sensory Obstacle Course & Water Table. Sensory play enhances brain development, motor skills, and social interactions, giving your child a head start in learning. Don't miss out on these fun, educational experiences!



**VESTAL PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**RUNNING CAMP**  
July 29 - August 16  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
GRADES 4TH - 8TH  
VESTAL HIGH SCHOOL  
DICK HOOVER STADIUM  
\$50 RESIDENTS,  
\$60 NON-RESIDENTS  
For more information and to register, go to  
[vestalny.myrec.com](http://vestalny.myrec.com)

**GIRLS VARSITY**  
**TENNIS COACH**  
**OPENING**  
EMAIL IF INTERESTED  
[JTGANNON@VESTAL.K12.NY.US](mailto:JTGANNON@VESTAL.K12.NY.US)



# VHS GRADUATION CEREMONY! V



Ian Chung, Valedictorian

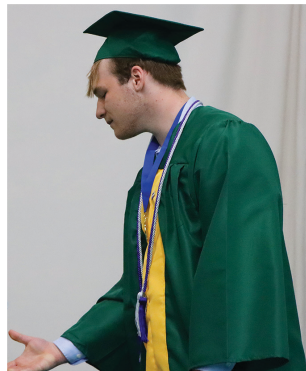
Jessica LaClair, Senior Speaker

Dawn Young, Principal and Kathryn Egan, Board of Education President, Final Certification





# VHS GRADUATION CEREMONY, GETTING THE DIPLOMA!



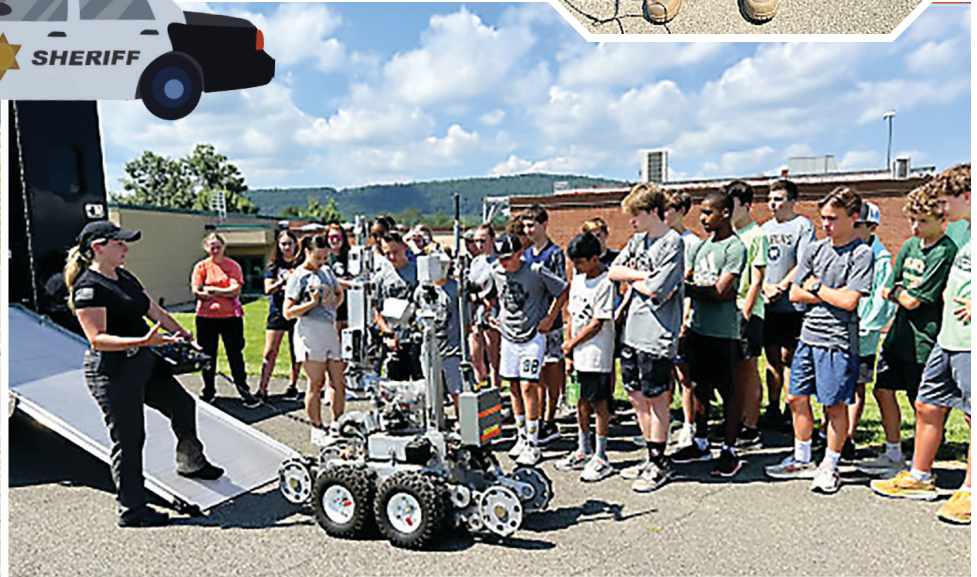
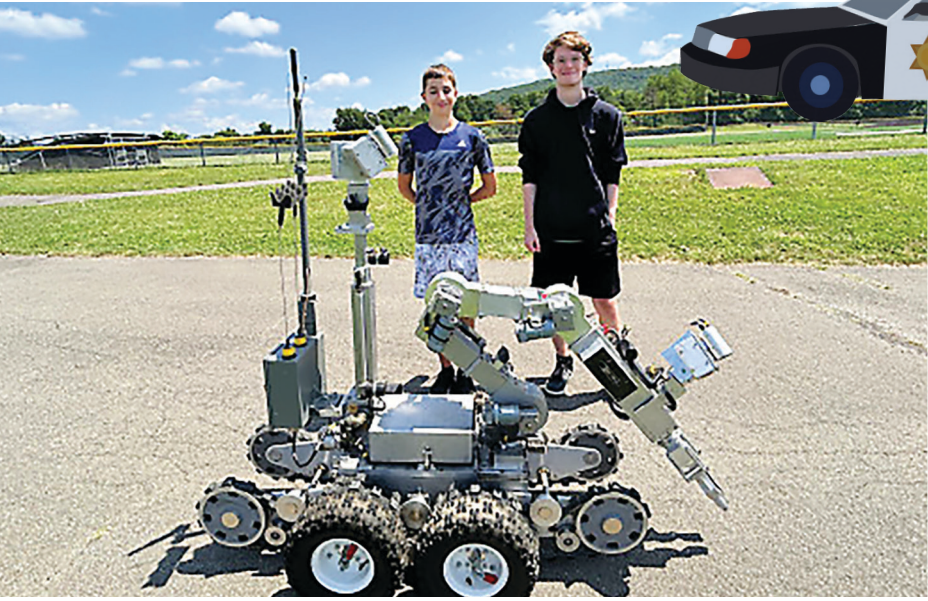
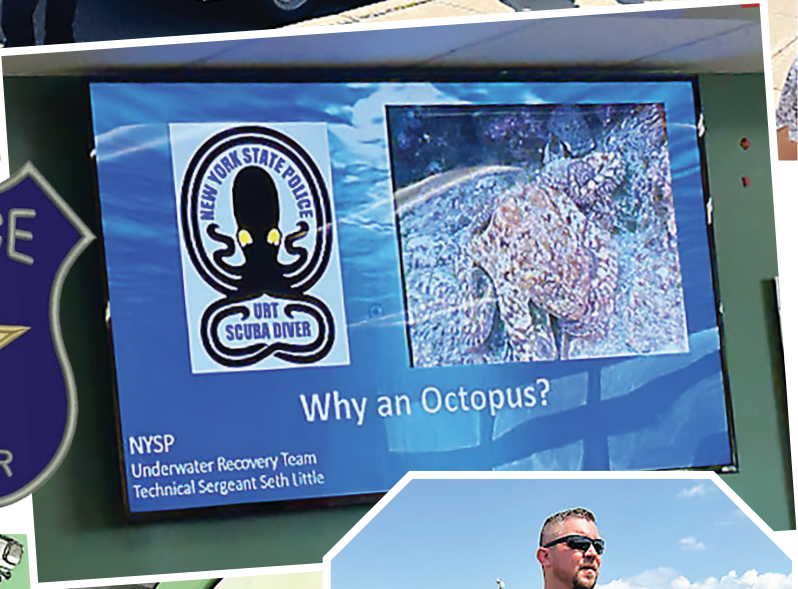


# VESTAL YOUTH POLICE ACADEMY

**SECOND SESSION!**

**CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS** **CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS** **CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS** **CR** **CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS**

Last week, we welcomed a group of approximately 50 high school students to the second session of the 2024 Vestal Youth Police Academy. This age group is with us for the next two weeks and we are excited to work with them and show them the many different aspects of law enforcement. Our neighbors to the north, Endicott Police Department came out to spend time with us and brought some of their bomb squad equipment to demo. We were also visited by the New York State Police Under Water Recovery Team who displayed their scuba gear for an onsite demonstration in the pool.



Photos Courtesy of the Vestal Police Department



# Vestal CSD Leaders Discuss Student Cell Phones and Devices' Impact on Education on NYSSBA Podcast

Edited into text by Newspaper Publishers

Smart phones have changed the way we communicate and receive information, but having access to this technology has created challenges and distractions for students.

The allure of social media notifications, text messages and endless digital entertainment options often proves too potent for students to resist, leading to diminished focus, disrupted learning environments and a decline in academic performance.

The effects of cell phone distractions in the classroom and at large impact students' social and emotional well-being, mental health and ability to stay engaged in learning.

Host: Darci D'Ercole, Director of Leadership Development, NYSSBA

Guests: Clifford R. Kasson, Superintendent, Vestal Central School District, Dr. Andrew M. Blaine, Director of Instruction, Vestal Central School District

Darci D'Ercole: "My guests from the Vestal Central school district and the stakeholders in their community are examining the impact of smartphones and social media on their students. Together, they are working to better understand the power of distraction and what can be done to reduce the negative impact it has on students in and out of the classroom.

As we dive into this topic which is very broad, I do want to know why this conversation now? What made it important for you to dive into this conversation?"

Superintendent Kasson: "I'll start the conversation with this: many years ago, I was a building admin principal at Vestal High School and actually Andy was with me for a number of years. Looking back 10 years or more there have been issues with student device use in the high school and particularly in classrooms. We would hear from teachers and staff about the disruption of the cell phones and what is with teaching and learning causing an aspect where they were unable to really get through lessons in a timely fashion that they would normally like to have completed.

So with that, we ordered pencil boxes, if you will, plastic pencil boxes, and we asked students to put their phones in the pencil boxes and set them on their desks in the classroom. And we thought that would take care of it because they still see their phone in front of them and the teacher could teach and so they're not using her cell phone, but oh boy were we wrong.

With that, there is a fear of missing out as students were really focused on seeing if the phone would light up you, because you could kind of see through those kind of semi-transparent pencil boxes and/or if they were buzzing; sometimes, they didn't have the ringer off. [The phones] were becoming a real distraction, and then it was a consistency [issue] of having the cell phones in the box. You know, sometimes teachers are busy teaching and maybe they didn't notice a student not put their phone in [the box], they're holding the cell phone underneath their desk, and they're manipulating the cell phone.

So then we said well maybe we need to engage the cell phones in the learning process, so as a lot of our listings are probably remember, Kahoot was a big kind of educational gaming with the cell phones to combine those two aspects, and we realized after trying that it really was not the top level education that we like to have in our classrooms. It really wasn't advancing the level of learning that we would expect.

So this has been going on for a while, we've been trying to [figure out] how we can make sure we have high-level education in our classrooms without the distractions of cell

phones. And that led to the project golden bear committee, and then it also led to a device and AI task force really went to delve into this question and this situation that's happening in our school district. It's not only our high school, but it's prevalent in our middle school and even creeping into our elementary buildings. So this is coming to us from many stakeholders: obviously our principals, administrators, our teachers, staff, and our community and parents. We needed to do something to investigate this and Andy was on the team here with assistant superintendent Patrick Clark who really delved into this and did some research.

Dr. Blaine: "We started to hear the now is the time to do something from different groups from students who were expressing that they had difficulty with the addictive nature of social media, from teachers who were trying to teach an environment of distraction, from parents, from board members, from administrators, so we started these conversations and what we heard from different groups and what we've experienced ourselves is that this is becoming an increasing problem. You talk to different districts of different school leaders across the state and they'll tell you similar things, but we're all concerned about youth mental health. A lot of this is exacerbated by student cell phone use and social media.

In addition to the conversations that we had in our two committees, there were two reports that came out in 2023 that we paid particular attention to. In 2023 the surgeon general came out with his advisory, 'Social Media and Youth Mental Health' and also Common Sense Media came out with their report called 'The Constant Companion Report' also in 2023. Both of those reports focused on the impact of screens and social media on youth mental health and on learning and attention in the classroom. There's also a whole array of other factors coming to play with this like sleep, like focus on schoolwork outside of the school building, like cyber bullying. It wasn't just that kind of research that we looked at, we had countless conversations within committees and outside of committees and then once we understood the problem then the next question is where do we go from here, what kind of decisions do we wanna make in terms of implementation? We can't solve the entire problem but what are some things that we can't do to help alleviate some of this?"

Darci D'Ercole: "You mentioned the research is tied to the initiative, so tell me what does the research tell us about our brains and how we think and learn?"

Dr. Blaine: "So where we start with this conversation is that learning is difficult in the best of situations. We know that in order to learn, we need to pay attention and that is very effortful and takes a lot of work so even without screens, phones, and distractions it's difficult to pay attention to something. When we introduce things that get in the way of that then we sometimes think that we are multitasking which means to pay attention to two or more cognitively demanding things at once. Cognitive scientists tell us that multitasking is a myth it's not possible to do those two things at once. Some people get upset when we talk about the fact that multitasking is not really possible because some people think of themselves as good multitaskers. But what we're actually doing instead of multitasking is single tasking: we're switching from one task and one thing that we're paying attention to to the next.

If we translate that into the classroom, we are asking students to focus on learning, on the lesson, and on the

teacher, potentially, and then they get notifications [from] their phone. It's not possible for them to focus on the phone and the lesson at the same time and they're single tasking between the phone and then the lesson. There is a residual effect there too, there's a time loss in between switching so it takes time and effort to refocus on something. We realize that this is a real issue that we can't ask students or anyone to multitask in the classroom."

Darci D'Ercole: "Superintendent Kasson, I'm sure you've seen enough examples of this happening; what other thoughts do you have on how students are challenged to be learning in the classroom with devices on the desk or in their hands, or frustrations of teachers?"

Superintendent Kasson: "Successful thinking takes time and energy but that does evolve into your working memory and that's where the cognitive level of student learning really happens and then it turns into long-term memory. When you look at the research of the brain when [students] are distracted, they don't have time to process sensitized information, successful thinking is not taking place, and it's not getting into the long-term memory, therefore when [students] leave the classroom they really haven't gained an educational experience. And that was so evident as an administrator; I remember speaking to one teacher in particular, a chemistry teacher really trying to go above and beyond to keep it engaging and [the teacher] said I can't compete with cell phones and I can't get the results I want. We have seen firsthand the impact in our school district. We have a high-performance school district, and part of that is always a continuous improvement. That's why we've focused on how we can tackle this issue of our students being addicted to these devices."

Darci D'Ercole: "We know that students are quite vulnerable at this age; the brain is still developing. I [recently] was educated that the brain really isn't finished developing until you're in your early 20s or mid 20s, so there's a lot of brain development still happening at this age. What is the mental health impact for our students? What do you see and what are you hoping will be different with this new strategy that you're thinking about?"

Dr. Blaine: "We think it's important to recognize that we all struggle at one time or another with smartphone usage, with our attention being taken away from something that we were trying to focus on, with notifications, with the addictive nature of social media. But as you said, Darci, we as adults have a little bit more self regulation and a little bit more awareness around that. We're talking about middle schoolers and high schoolers that may not have that type of self regulation and awareness.

Common Sense Media explains that [this age group receives] an average of 237 notifications during the day, much of that happening during school, and because of that, students feel that fear of missing out and now they need to keep up with everything.

They're losing sleep because of the addictive nature of it. 80% of teens admitted partaking in what's called 'vamping', like a vampire being on their phones at night when they should be sleeping. Getting that sleep is so important for teens and development that they need that also takes away from focus.

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There's also a lot of things that happen on social media that could be detrimental. One of them could be social comparison; we know that a lot of people show the highlight reels of their life on social media and there's this inevitable comparison: Why aren't I on this great vacation, why don't I look this good; when really a lot of those photos and videos are highly edited. Then there's bullying and harassment that goes on through social media and then they bring that into the school, and that has a detrimental effect as well."

Darci D'Ercole: "Superintendent Kasson, do you have some strategies or suggestions about what you could do about this? Do you want to share with us a little bit about those thoughts that have come out of the committee?"

Superintendent Kasson: "[What we have found is] the number one remedy they're saying is cell phones out of the classroom. How do we do that? We're looking at different possibilities. We did find this company, Yonder, [which has] what's called Yonder Pouches that you could put a cell phone into and it has a magnetic lock. So [students] can have their cell phones with them all day, but they just don't have access to it. We're actually running a pilot program for this September in our middle school. We purchased a number of these pouches using American rescue plan funding and with that, we are going to have a pilot where when students enter the building, they will put their cell phones into the pouch and then you set the magnet. They have their cell phone with them but they do not have access to it all day. Because what research has shown, if you ask students to keep their cell phone away in a locker or in a backpack, as soon as they leave that classroom to change classes, they are on their phone and they're trying to say what did I miss, what do I have to get to? What has been seen in our own statistics here in our school district, the level of anxiety and depression from students has really increased since the pandemic. We also know from our research that 95% of our students are engaged on at least one different social media platform and they're on it all day and all night. The only way that we can preserve the high-level teaching and learning in our school district is that we need to try a way of making sure students do not have access to the phone during the educational component of the school day. That means at lunch, that means in-between changing classes. We really think this could help."

To listen to the full podcast episode, visit <https://on.soundcloud.com/SoGqGT1ae1jfmK8U6>  
Sourced from New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) President's Gavel Podcast (episode 43).

## SUMMER FUN FACTS

1. The largest scoop of ice cream ever weighed over 3,000 pounds.
2. Around 100,000 thunderstorms happen in the U.S. each year, and most occur during the summer.
3. During the summer, you can visit Explore.com, which runs live streams from Alaska's Katmai National Park, and watch bears bulk up to become the Fat Bear Week Champion.
4. The longest barbecue on record lasted 80 hours!
5. The biggest bonfire ever was almost 200 feet tall!
6. There are more than 1,200 varieties of watermelon.
7. There is a World Margarita Championship held each August in Arizona.

# NY Attorney General James to Sheriff Fred Akshar's office, Cease and Desist

By: Staff Reporter



NY Atty. General James sent the Broome County Sheriff's Office a cease-and-desist letter last week impacting the department's OpVee program with administration of OpVee.

"OpVee" refers to a brand name for a naloxone nasal spray used in the treatment of opioid overdoses. Naloxone is a medication designed to rapidly reverse opioid overdose. Here's an overview of OpVee and its uses:

### What is OpVee?

OpVee is a form of naloxone administered via a nasal spray. Naloxone is an opioid antagonist, which means it binds to opioid receptors and can reverse or block the effects of other opioids. It is a critical tool in responding to opioid overdoses.

### Uses of OpVee

#### Emergency Treatment of Opioid Overdose:

**Reversal of Overdose Symptoms:** OpVee is used to reverse the life-threatening effects of an opioid overdose, including extreme drowsiness, slowed or stopped breathing, and loss of consciousness.

**Rapid Response:** The nasal spray format allows for quick and easy administration, which is crucial in emergency situations where every second counts.

#### First Responder Tool:

**Law Enforcement and EMTs:** Police officers, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and firefighters often carry OpVee as part of their standard equipment to provide immediate assistance in overdose situations.

**Public Health Programs:** Many public health programs distribute naloxone kits, including OpVee, to first responders and community members to improve the response to opioid overdoses.

#### Community Distribution:

**Harm Reduction Programs:** OpVee is distributed through harm reduction programs to individuals at risk of opioid overdose, their families, and caregivers.

**Pharmacy Availability:** In some regions, OpVee can be obtained without a prescription at pharmacies, making it accessible to the general public.

#### Administration of OpVee

**Nasal Spray:** OpVee is administered as a nasal spray. The user inserts the nozzle into one nostril of the person experiencing an overdose and presses the plunger to release the medication.

**Single-Dose:** Each OpVee device is pre-loaded with a single dose of naloxone, designed for one-time use.

#### Immediate Action:

**Call Emergency Services:** Even after administering OpVee, it is critical to call emergency services immediately. Naloxone's effects are temporary, and the individual may require additional medical attention.

**Follow-Up Care:** Monitoring the individual after administering OpVee is essential, as additional doses may be necessary if symptoms return.

#### Importance of OpVee

##### Life-Saving Potential:

**Preventing Fatal Overdoses:** By rapidly reversing the effects of opioid overdose, OpVee can prevent deaths and give individuals a chance to receive further medical treatment.

**Widespread Impact:** With the ongoing opioid crisis, the availability and use of naloxone products like OpVee are

critical in reducing the number of overdose-related fatalities.

#### Empowerment and Preparedness:

**Empowering Communities:** Providing OpVee to at-risk individuals and their communities empowers them to take immediate action in overdose situations, potentially saving lives.

**Preparedness:** Having OpVee readily available ensures that individuals are prepared to respond effectively to an opioid overdose, increasing the chances of a positive outcome.

OpVee is a vital tool in the fight against the opioid crisis, providing an effective means of reversing opioid overdoses quickly and efficiently. Its ease of use, availability, and life-saving potential make it an essential component of emergency response and community health programs aimed at reducing the impact of opioid overdoses.

Following the decision by the NY Attorney General and the breaking news last week, Newspaper Publishers asked for comment from Truth Pharm.

#### Statement for Opvee article from Alexis Pleus, Executive Director of Truth Pharm.

While we are stunned and disappointed the Sheriff of Broome County would paint our organization as disinterested in ensuring we have lifesaving tools in the overdose epidemic when we are the ones whose kids have died and we continue our fight to keep people alive, we have questions and feel disappointment with our Sheriff's department as well. Fred Askhar is not being honest in regards to guidance he was provided. Both the Broome County Health Department and the New York State Department of Health urged our sheriff NOT to use this very experimental medication. Yes, this medication has been approved by the FDA, the reality is, it was approved in 2023. This is a very new medication that is no more effective than Naloxone on opioid and fentanyl overdoses and yet it causes severe withdrawal symptoms for a person it is administered to for up to 12 hours. There is literally no reason to use this medication over using Naloxone to reverse an overdose unless your goal is to make the person suffer. We are unsure of why our Broome County Sheriff, elected to serve the people of Broome County, whose salary is paid by our tax dollars is parading himself around New York State as a Big Pharma sales rep. We are very concerned about his interest and investment in this particular medication. We don't understand why the sheriff has decided to cross his work over into the medical field rather than listen to the medical experts who have advised him not to use Opvee. The very video the Sheriff posted on his social media showing Opvee being used is evidence of his and his officers lack of medical training. They administer Opvee to a person who was already breathing.

We are grateful that the State Attorney General issued a cease and desist since it seemed the Sheriff was not willing to listen to the experts and was putting his officers, the taxpayers of Broome County and people who struggle with substance use at risk.

With the severe withdrawals this medication causes, there are concerns by medical experts that people may die due to those severe withdrawal symptoms, if that happened at the hands of our Sheriff's Department, the officer could be held personally liable and the tax payers of Broome County would definitely be liable as we are a self-insured count. I'm appalled the Sheriff was willing to make that gamble for no reason at all.

Naloxone works. It's what the medical and EMS systems prefer.



# Vestal Fire Does Demonstration For Vestal Youth Police Academy

Photos courtesy of the Vestal Fire Department

Vestal Fire was honored yesterday to do several demonstrations for the Vestal Police Department Youth Academy. Demonstrations of car fire and extrication calls were demonstrated along with some other extra fun things! Thank You Vestal Police Department in once again asking us to join you in this wonderful Youth Academy you sponsor every year! We Love helping out, and demonstrating some of the things we do for our great town!





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