



January 2022

# Hoops, cheering take back seat

COVID claims basketball, but spring track team could emerge

## Staff Report

One of the highlights at Banyan during the long, cold winter months has always been basketball and cheering. Banyan hoops had it all ... games, cheerleading, music, excitement and fun.

But thanks to COVID, we have had to postpone our basketball program with hopes of bringing it back next year.

On a positive note, in order to make up for the loss of basketball, we are hopeful of forming a spring track team or track competition (see Page 3 of the Banyan Newsletter).

Players and cheerleaders miss the basketball action. Here is what they have to say.

"I miss Banyan basketball and being with my friends and teammates on the court," Justin said.

"I also miss having my family and friends and cheerleaders cheering me on while I play one of my favorite sports. I miss the extra physical activity and practices with Coach Hofmann as we run, dribble and shoot. I wish our school could play against other teams and have real games like other schools."

As one of the captains of cheering, Keaton remembers, leading the cheer, "Give me a B!"

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"It was so fun that we all got together, laughed and had a good time," Keaton said.

"I miss cheerleading because I liked the cheers," Arianna said.

"My sister even knows the cheers!"

Catherine remembered the cheering when she toured Banyan.

"At Saturday School, we sometimes did the cheers, too,"

Catherine said. "I loved that."

"I miss the cheer, 'Go green, Go white,'" Minsuh added. "I stood next to Jane and we did the Genie cheer. I want to do cheerleading again. I miss our green and silver pom poms in our hair."

Jade said, "I like the cheer, 'A-W-E ... awesome are we,' 'Make a basket,' and everybody likes "2, 4, 6, 8."



# It's time for a Banyan track team

Guest columnist Aiden wants new sport up and running

By Aiden

I think we should have a track team at Banyan School.

We practically have a track now that goes around the school.

I think lots of people at school would like to run track because it's good exercise, and it's fun, too!

We could also have trophies!



# At the top of his class!

## Gavin wins Morris County wrestling championship

By Mr. Hofmann, Editor

In one of the biggest wrestling matches of his young life, Gavin walked off the mat a winner – and the 87-pound Morris County Junior High champion!

Gavin, a seventh grader, defeated Roxbury's Jayden Riley in the finals, 3-2. A short time earlier, Riley defeated Gavin in a dual match, 3-2.

Gavin altered his gameplan the second time around.

"I lost to him the first time," Gavin said. "He was more aggressive so I wanted to be more aggressive this time."

In his next match on Monday, Gavin defeated Connor Laurie, 6-0.

He will now focus on winning the Tri-County Tournament in February.

"He really had an amazing middle school season," Gavin's mom, Judy, said. "It was beautiful to see his confidence grow as the season progressed. We are so proud . His team came in third overall on Saturday, and Gavin was the only wrestler on his team to come back home with a first place medal for his weight class."



# Little Buddy is a BIG handful!

Kitty-sitting was never this much fun ... or tiring

By Mr. Hofmann, Editor

My sister Betty took a 10-day trip to California and she asked Mrs. Hofmann, myself, and our son Joseph to look after her cat LB (Little Buddy).

We have always been a kitty home but haven't had a cat since last February.

We'd already met LB on Thanksgiving and when my sister asked if we could take him in, we were delighted.

But we had forgotten just how tricky having a kitten around the house could be.

You constantly have to be on your toes!!

Take this morning, for instance. I made scrambled eggs before coming to school. While they were cooking, I turned my back on him for about 5-10 seconds. During that time, LB had already jumped up on the kitchen counter and was licking the

bowl where I was going to put my cooked eggs! Ewww! He puts "the nose" in "nosy." LB is incredibly interested in anything I am doing, always poking his cute little nose into everything!

Nevertheless, LB has given us a lot of joy. When my sister comes home from California, we will return him to her, but he has sparked our interest in owning a kitty again. Mrs. Hofmann and I will go and buy a kitty the first chance we get!



# Not enough time in the day

Mora had so much on her plate during MLK weekend!

## Staff Report

Mora and Banyan enjoyed a three-day weekend recently. She had plenty of items on her agenda.

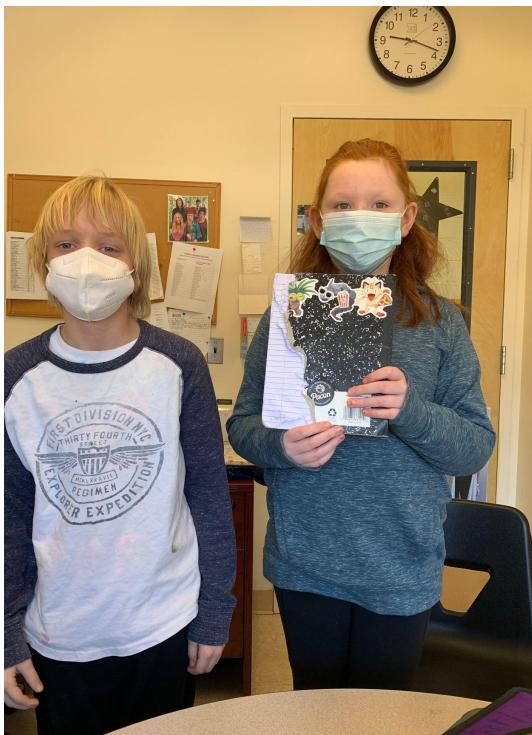
Here is a quick recap of her stay-at-home long weekend.

1. Watched "Sing" (if you missed this one, rent it)
2. Learned the rules and played a new card game "L.I.a.m.a.s". Daddy won. Really excellent once we figured out how to play correctly.
3. Mora sells Girl Scout cookies. Each of the last two years her sales have been over 600 boxes. On Sunday, with assistance, she set up her digital sales platform. Mora wrote her cookie story, posted her photo, personalized dozens of messages to potential customers and sent out scores of emails with a link to the order form. She set a much lower sales goal (300) but she has already almost reached it so she will elevate it soon.
4. We lit luminaries in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., a South Orange Maplewood tradition, last night. (Photo on the right)
6. On Mora's "Every Day is a Holiday" calendar, yesterday was Cable Car Day and today is Gourmet Coffee Day.



# This tall tale is very true

A lame, warn-out excuse actually happened. No, really!



## Staff Report

Have you ever heard the expression, “The dog ate my homework” as an excuse when someone didn’t do their homework?

Well guess what, it is true!

Keaton and Catherine saw it happen first hand in Ms. Gross’ speech class!

Warning: When you are doing your speech homework, don’t let your pets eat your notebook!

# Need a perfect snowman?

Here are instructions for the next time it snows!



**By Dylan, Jade, and Ms. Megna**

In order to make a perfect snowman you need to be prepared with these clothing items. You should be wearing thermals under your snow pants and winter jacket. You also need snow boots with warm socks, a hat, mittens or gloves, and a scarf to protect your face from the cold. Then you need to head outside where all the snow is!

You start with making the biggest or bottom part of the snowman.

Once you're outside you should grab a big handful of snow and start forming it into a ball shape.

You take the small ball and add more small balls together by rolling them on the ground. When you have the bottom done, you start making the second snow ball for the belly part of your snowman. This part needs to be smaller than the bottom ball.

After the second ball is formed and placed on top of the bottom ball you begin making the littlest ball which will be the head.

When all three balls are formed and on top of each other you can begin adding the eyes, carrot nose, buttons, stick arms with mittens, and lastly the hat and scarf.

The snowman's eyes are usually made of coal or rocks, its arms are made of sticks, its buttons are made from more coal or rocks, and its nose is usually a bright orange carrot. When adding a hat or scarf you can find old things from around your house.

Now you have made the perfect snowman and can wait for it to turn into Frosty. Hopefully he comes to life.

# This little Piggy went to ... Byram

Banyan's beloved pet moved in with Ms. Wente for the holidays

By Ms. Wente

Pig went on an adventure and stayed in Byram for his winter break! First he enjoyed a scenic car ride in a comfy kitty carrier. Then he moved into my daughter, Nora's room. She loves her new roomie and gives him kisses!

He is enjoying the company of my four kids and all the snuggles he can get. He has also enjoyed peppers, spinach, celery and mini cucumbers. For Christmas morning he had a special breakfast of strawberry tops and spinach.

So far Pig enjoys the company of the family dog, but would rather the three cats stay in their own rooms.



**Pig has made himself at home at Ms. Wente's home – and vice-versa. Ms. Wente's children have made themselves at home with Pig!**

# Can you guess which Zone you are in?

Zones of Regulation determine our many moods

## By the Banyan Speech Staff

The Speech department created a bulletin board outside their suite which highlights a new staff member each month, and asks a very important question: What zone is he/she in? The Zones of Regulation are an essential part of our Social Thinking curriculum at Banyan, and having the opportunity to see some familiar faces in different zones helps our students generalize these skills!

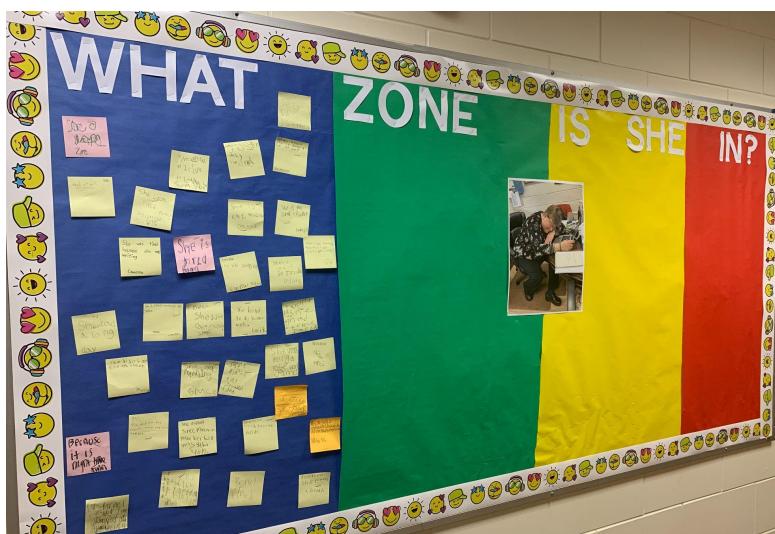
During speech sessions, students are asked to analyze the picture, use cues from the person's face or environment, and make a smart guess about what zone the person is in and why they may be in that zone. The students write their ideas on a sticky note and paste it on the board!

We kicked off our interactive bulletin board with Ms. Mary, our school counselor. All students guessed right: she was in the Blue Zone!

Next was Ms. Gross' turn. She's one of our Speech Therapists, who was in the Yellow Zone! See her pictured here with Roman:



Finally, we had Mrs. McNeil on our board. Can you guess what zone she's in and why?



The ZONES of Regulation™ Reproducible E The Zones of Regulation Visual

## The **Zones** of Regulation™

BLUE ZONE Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	GREEN ZONE Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	YELLOW ZONE Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	RED ZONE Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

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# Magic Carpet Ride

Grace enjoys ski vacation in Vermont

## Staff Report

Grace went skiing in Vermont over the break and did great on the magic carpet. She even got a private lesson from her very own grandfather, Pops, who is an official ski instructor on the mountain. Lucky girl!



# Mora's excellent adventure

## Philadelphia trip had little bit of everything

**By Mora**

On Monday, December 13th, my mom, my dad, and I went to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the city of brotherly love.

It was a good morning to be tourists because it wasn't too cold or crowded.

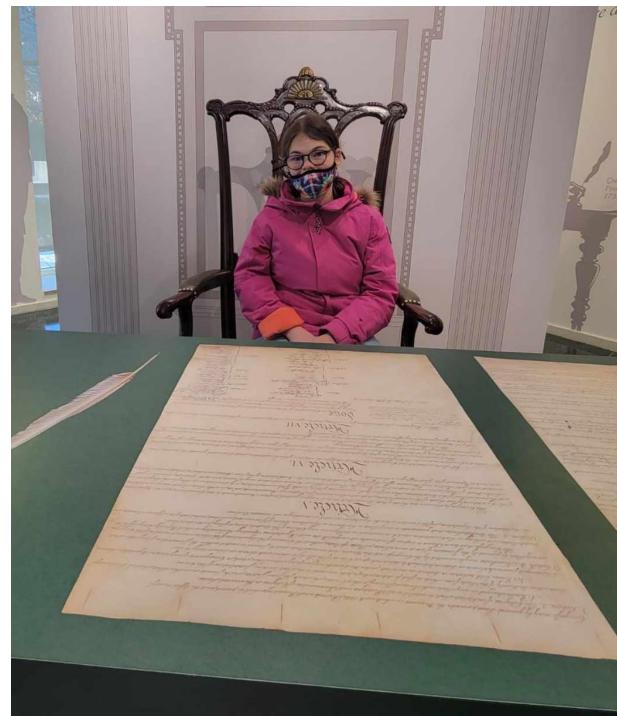
We visited Independence Hall and stood in the room where the representatives from the 13 original colonies signed the Declaration of Independence.

Then we crossed the road to get to the Liberty Bell. The Liberty Bell doesn't ring because it has a big crack, but tourists come to see it because it's a symbol of freedom to people all over the world.

We went to the Independence Visitors Center, and I sat on a replica chair of the one George Washington sat on when he led the Constitutional Convention in 1787.

For lunch, we ate Philly cheesesteak sandwiches without the cheese, along with French fries and onion rings. It was yummy!

I like Philadelphia because there is a lot to see and do and I want to go back again soon.



# Wrestling with a great time

Cassidy, Jade, and their dads attend WWE Smackdown

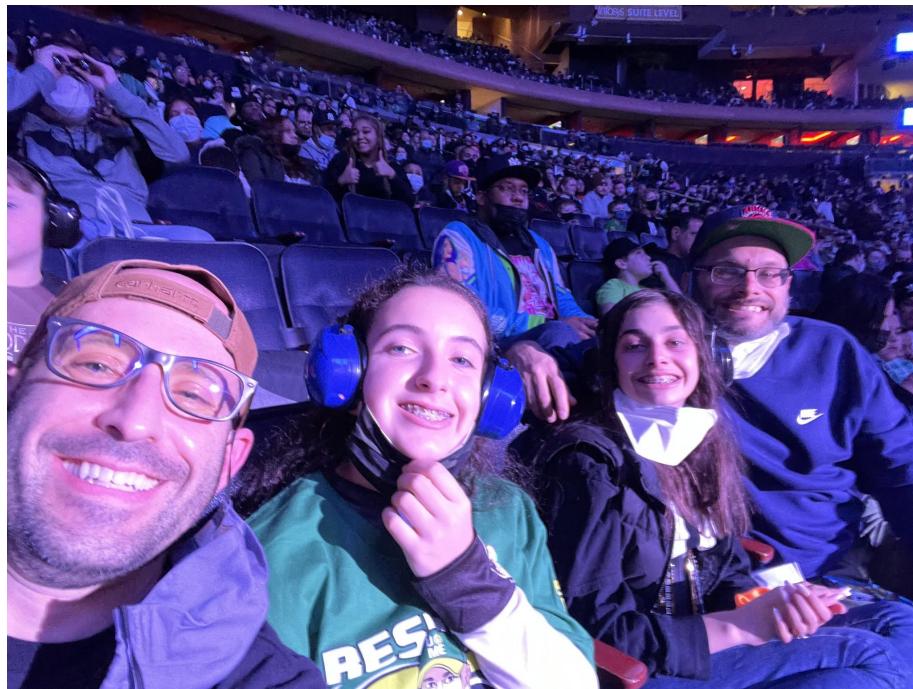


## Staff Report

Cassidy and Jade had a fun – and eventful – winter break. The two girls and their dads attended the WWE Holiday Smackdown at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

They had a great time and loved getting their own championship belts.

Cassidy especially loved the steel cage match between Edge and Kevin Owens.



# A 'monstrous' new friend

Evan, family, adopt pet dog from a local shelter



## Staff Report

Evan wanted to share that he got a new dog! His name is Abe and he is 4 months old. We rescued him from the Animal Alliance in Lambertville, N.J. He is a lab mix and the vet said he is going to be "monstrous." He is already 40 pounds! Evan enjoys walking him, training him to sit. The best part is that Abe gets to sleep in his room at night while his other dog Tillie sleeps with his parents. It's nice to have someone to keep him company at nighttime. Evan already told his parents that his plan is to get a new dog every three years (His parents are not necessarily thrilled about that)! Evan can't wait to have everyone meet Abe (and Tillie) at this year's Pet to school day!



# Tommy: Busy as a bee

Banyan student had fun-filled time in the Fall

## Staff Report

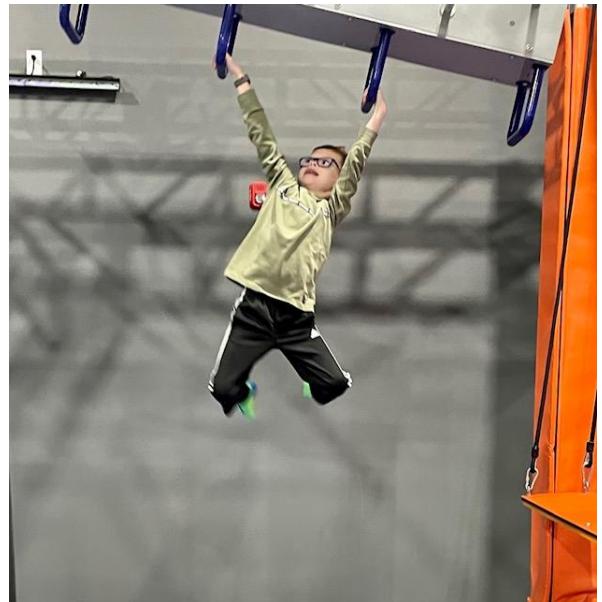
Tommy has been very, very active lately.

In November, the second-grader had a wonderful time and got in a lot of exercise at the trampoline park near his home.

He also enjoyed some fun outings in November and December.

Tommy visited the top of Hudson Yards and the mall in the Oculus building, along with the World Trade Center memorial.

On Thanksgiving morning, he participated in a Turkey Trot. Tommy also visited Turtle Back Zoo twice, meeting Grace and Maeve for one of the visits as well as some other friends.



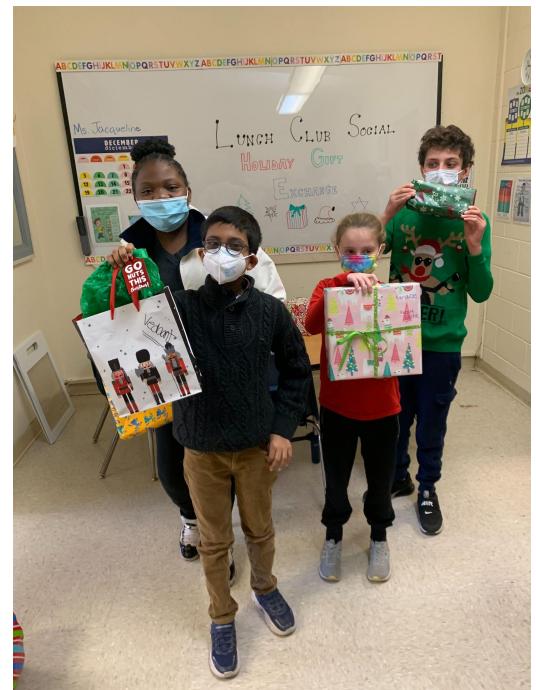
# What are friends for?

## Banyan Holiday Gift Exchange a smashing success

### Staff Report

There's a lot you can do with \$10 and some friends! Our Lunch Club Social groups participated in a Holiday Gift Exchange in December. Each student was assigned a friend to buy a gift for. During speech sessions, we talked about some things our friend liked, and what would be a reasonable gift to buy for them with \$10. Unfortunately, no one received an iPad! On December 22nd, right before we left for winter break, students were called to the Speech Suite group-by-group, and some holiday magic occurred! Everyone took their gifts from the table and opened them up. Then we made "smart guesses" to find the person who bought us our gift! Everyone had a blast! Here are some pictures.







### Candy Cane Compliments

Lunch Club Social students weren't the only ones to receive some holiday cheer before we left for break! During speech sessions, we practiced writing compliments to our classmates and teachers. The compliments were put in envelopes and every person - staff and students - received one to take home, full of nice words from our Banyan family!



# In need of a quick laugh?

Banyan Jokesters are here to provide you with one

By Jane, Anisa and Miss Gwen

1. What did the icy road say to the car?

“Want to go for a spin?”



**2. What falls in the winter but never gets hurt?**

Snow.



**3. Why did the girl keep her trumpet out in the snow?**

She liked playing cool jazz.



#### **4. How do mountains stay warm?**

They put on their snowcaps.



**5. What's a snowman's favorite drink?**

Iced tea.



# Getting ready to compete

## Banyan increases reading activity for big contest



By Ms. Kempton

Attention All Parents & Students: Banyan School has increased our reading activity from Jan. 10 - Feb. 28 and is competing to win Learning Ally's national Great Reading Games to gain recognition and prizes for our school! Reading is power!

### Ms. Kempton's Reading Corner

I'm so excited to share a resource that our school has purchased to support your child at school and at home. I want to ensure that your child is a happy, confident learner in their classroom and has access to books in an audio format to build their love of reading.

Learning Ally is a national nonprofit that provides access to human-read audiobooks through a reading app. They have popular books that students are interested in, as well as textbooks.

When students read with Learning Ally, it takes away the effort of decoding so your child can focus on the meaning of what they are reading. This is called "ear reading" – a powerful way to help students enjoy books.



One of the best things about Learning Ally is that most of the books have human voices, which help to model what reading should sound like; it pronounces words correctly and helps to build your child's vocabulary, comprehension and fluency in reading.

Your child's reading teacher will be adding books to your child's Learning Ally virtual bookshelf. You can download the free app on your personal computer, phone or tablet and log in with your child's credentials to add the books they want to read. I hope you take advantage of this wonderful resource we are providing to your child!

Please let myself or your child's reading teacher know if you have any questions!

**Wednesday, March 2nd, 2022: Read Across America Day Event!**

Save the date for this special event! More details coming soon!

