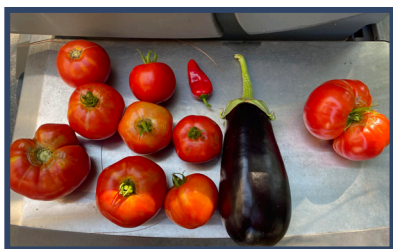




We are: Having Fun

■ Page 2: When Valley Elementary students couldn't go on field trips, the field trips came to them.



We are: Growing

■ Page 2: Valley's garden produced a bumper crop this summer, teaching students in the culinary program plenty of life lessons along the way.



We are: Exploring

■ Page 4: Individuals in Valley's Today & Tomorrow program are exploring new destinations, including Tyngsborough's Rivefront Park.

VALLEY COLLABORATIVE

Volume 10, Issue 1 News for the extended Valley Collaborative community Fall 2021

A New Season



FROM LEFT:
TIM PIWOWAR,
VALLEY'S BOARD CHAIR
AND SUPERINTENDENT
OF BILLERICA PUBLIC
SCHOOLS, DR. CHRIS SCOTT,
VALLEY'S EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR AND EVERETT
(BILL) OLSEN, RETIRED
SUPERINTENDENT OF
WESTFORD PUBLIC
SCHOOLS.

Dear Valley Community:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff, students and families for a very successful summer school. Our students participated in many enrichment activities that enhanced their summer school experience.

As you are aware we are beginning the new school year "masked up." To date Valley has done a great job keeping staff, students and individuals in our adult program safe and healthy during the pandemic. We thank our Valley community for all their efforts to keep Valley a healthy and safe place to be.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Bill Olsen, who recently retired as the Superintendent of Westford Public Schools after fifty years of service. Valley recently celebrated Bill Olsen's retirement at the June Board of Directors Meeting.

We would like to welcome Dr. Christopher Chew, the new Superintendent of Westford Public Schools, to the Valley Board of Directors. We are looking forward to him being on the board for many years to come.

The new school year has gotten off to a great start for our Valley Elementary, Middle School and High School students. The DDS and MRC programs continue to thrive with new referrals coming in each month.

Thank you to the Valley families for your ongoing support.

If I can ever be of assistance, my door is always open.

My best to you,

Chris

Chris A. Scott, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Valley Elementary: Field Trips Come Home



STUDENT LINDSEY LAVAGNA DURING "TOUCH A TRUCK" WITH TYNGSBOROUGH FIRE DEPARTMENT.

where staff and students made their own tie-dye Valley shirts that were worn proudly throughout the summer.

The Valley visitors also provided plenty of educational content. The Acton Discovery Museum held workshops, teaching students about forces of motion, and how to build their own STEM-inspired toys. A percussion group called "Bash the Trash" came to our school and put on a concert to teach the

importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling.

While most of our ESY activities were held safely at school, Valley Elementary also had a few opportunities to hit the road. All classes went on hikes with PE teacher Brendan Casey, visiting parks, picnicking and playing mini golf. The whole school took a trip to Roller Kingdom to spend the day, learning to skate, learning to persevere when skating proved challenging, and just having fun. We also took a trip to Chunky's for a private screening of Space Jam. On the final day of ESY, we celebrated with a big outdoor block party, complete with music, dancing and a shaved ice truck. ■

Field trips are a highlight of Valley Elementary's extended school year program (ESY). But this year, COVID restrictions posed a challenge. Since it was hard for Valley students to travel off-site, school staff brought all of the fun and community spirit that field trips provide back to the school site.

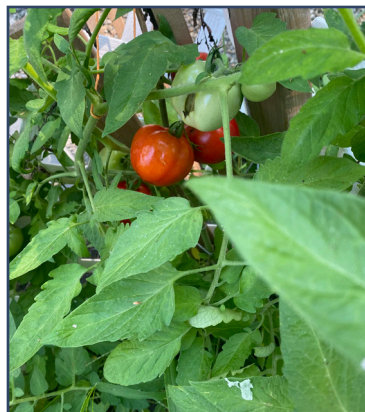
This summer's highlights included visits from Curious Creatures, who brought plenty of animals for students to see and touch. Snakes, tarantulas, a chinchilla, a giant tortoise and a baby alligator all made their way into the school building. A "Wild and Crazy Game Show" brought excitement and competition to our gym. The Tyngsborough Police and Fire Departments, and Department of Public Works brought cruisers and trucks for the students to explore and discuss with the community helpers. A BMX show came to our parking lot, and the students learned about bicycle safety while watching an amazing show full of high-flying tricks. We also had a tie-dye party

Alternative Middle/High School: Growing Season

This past spring, teacher Elias Gioumbakis, started a vegetable garden with the students in Valley's culinary program. Elias is a big believer that when kids work in the garden, they understand that they're a part of growing something that's going to help feed someone. Since planting in late spring, the students have harvested tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, basil, parsley, and rosemary that they have used in the preparation of the dishes that they made over the summer and are planning to make for this fall. Elias and the culinary

students plan to expand their vegetable garden this year.

Valley's garden produces more than vegetables and herbs. Our students are learning human kindness and other human values that are often missing from the typical school curriculum. This garden has also given the students many opportunities to make an impact on not only someone's day but also their own future. The students can go through their time at Valley knowing they can make a difference, no matter how small or big. ■



Transitional Middle/High School: Back to Work

Fresh off of a successful, fun filled summer, the Transitional High School and Middle School ushered in the new school year with anticipation for new and robust opportunities ahead. The Transitional High School added eleven new vocational sites for the 2021-2022 school year.

The addition of work sites such as AIS Furniture, Lilachouse Farm, Restore Peabody, Restore Lawrence, Home Goods Recycling Ministry, Strongwater Farm, and Meals on Wheels

will allow students to explore their interests while developing critical job skills. Independent work sites at Lawrence General Hospital, Endicott College, Tewksbury Auto, and Studio A Dance have also been added to provide work experiences specifically tailored to student interests.

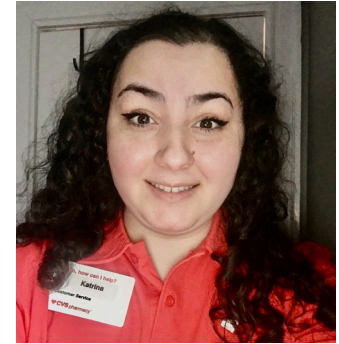
Students in the School and Life Skills classes have access to a unique prevocational work space which includes a wide range of vocational training kits and skills stations. Through hands-on experience, students will learn functional activities such as making a bed, chang-

ing sheets, vacuuming, packing a suitcase, and hanging and folding clothes. The prevocational skills stations include a variety of activities from sorting, assembling and packaging products to stocking and inventorying items in a general store. The goal for students in prevocational training is to acquire transferable skills that can be applied to future employment opportunities. ■



LEFT: STUDENTS JOE CORBETT FROM TOWNSEND AND NATE BERRY FROM WESTFORD WORK ON THEIR ASSEMBLY SKILLS. ABOVE: STUDENT JOE CORBETT FROM TOWNSEND SORTS GROCERIES.

Adult Services Spotlight



Katrina Tziotzioras was referred to Valley Collaborative through the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission to receive Job Placement services. Due to the pandemic, Katrina was furloughed from her job as a Bistro Server at a hotel and wanted to find a new career. She already had customer service skills from previous food service jobs; now she wanted to build on those skills to help people and make a difference in the community.

Katrina eagerly began services with Valley, updating her resume, professional references, and creating a cover letter. She spent time practicing mock interviews with Adult Services staff, which led to her becoming more comfortable in speaking with others and advocating for herself. Katrina ultimately decided to apply to CVS and was ecstatic to be offered a Retail Sales Associate position. She gained a lot of insight from her training and quickly learned information about the rewards program to be able to discuss the benefits with customers.

"Learning something new every day motivates me," said Katrina. "I want to expand my skills and grow as a person. Accomplishing tasks and goals set for the day leads me to want to get the work done. ■

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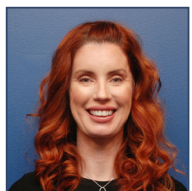
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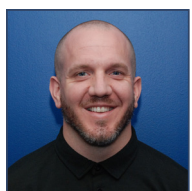
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Chair: Mr. Timothy Piowar

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Dr. Jay Lang

Superintendent, Chelmsford Public Schools

Mr. Steven Stone

Superintendent, Dracut Public Schools

Dr. Laura Chesson

Superintendent, Groton-Dunstable Regional School District

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Superintendent, Nashoba Valley Technical School District

Mr. Brad Morgan

Superintendent, North Middlesex Regional School District

Mr. Christopher Malone

Superintendent, Tewksbury Public Schools

Dr. Michael Flanagan

Superintendent, Tyngsborough Public Schools

Dr. Christopher Chew

Superintendent, Westford Public Schools

Today & Tomorrow: Out and About

INDIVIDUALS IN VALLEY'S TODAY & TOMORROW PROGRAM HAVE BEEN WORKING ON A COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO, IDENTIFYING PLACES THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO VISIT IN THE FUTURE. AFTER CHOOSING THE TOWN OF TYNGSBOROUGH TO FOCUS ON, THEY BEGAN SEARCHING OUT STATE PARKS AND OTHER ATTRACTIONS. RIVERFRONT PARK WAS AT THE TOP OF THEIR LIST. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: JOE GONSALVES, ALINE HAUNTON, SAWMARA NY, MICHAEL KEMP-TON AND ERIN MCGRATH.

