



***Newsletter Date: September 28, 2022***



## **MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL:**

The first few weeks of the 2022-2023 school year have really been amazing. Our veteran students have welcomed our new students and the new students have been a positive addition to our community. Also, our new staff members have settled in and are sharing their skills and talents with our students.

Remember that The Concept School is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year on Saturday, October 15, 2022, beginning at 4:00 p.m. with a cocktail hour in the All-Purpose Room. We will move to a large, enclosed, and climate-controlled tent set up next to the school for dinner, music, and brief remarks recognizing all that TCS has done to help students since 1972. The event should end around 7:30 p.m. and is free of charge. I hope you will join us at the celebration. Registration for this event will close on October 5, 2022.

Click here to register now:

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ej60yh5id49894e1&llr=77pakpmab>

Finally, we will be holding Parent-Teacher Conferences on Thursday, October 20, 2022. School dismisses at 12:00 p.m. and conferences will run from 1:00 - 7:30 p.m. We will be sending out a link to a sign-up form soon and you can choose to be in-person or virtual.

Sincerely,  
Bill



**September 28<sup>th</sup> – Back to School Night - 7:00pm**  
**October 12<sup>th</sup> – Open House for potential new families – 9:15am**  
**October 15<sup>th</sup> – TCS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration**  
**October 20<sup>th</sup> – Parent Conferences -1:00-7:30; noon dismissal**  
**October 21<sup>st</sup> – Teacher In-service – No school**  
**November 7<sup>th</sup> – School Picture Day – all grades**  
**November 8<sup>th</sup> – School closed – Election Day**



*You are cordially invited to join The Concept School  
for our 50th Anniversary Celebration  
on Saturday, October 15, 2022  
at*

*The Concept School  
1120 E Street Road  
West Chester, PA 19382*

*Cocktail Hour starts at 4:00  
Dinner at 5:30  
Head of School and Board remarks at 7:00*

*Please RSVP by Scanning this Code:*



## **The Concept School 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

*For more information and to RSVP to the event, you can also use this link:*

<http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=77pakpmab&oeidk=a07ej60yh5id49894e1>



This year, The Concept School Community is happy to welcome Mr. Chris Brady, Social Studies teacher, Kathryn Burtch, Teacher Assistant, Lauren Schwind, Art Teacher, and Donna Marie Zoccoli, Math Teacher.

**Kathryn Burtch** is the new Teacher Assistant at TCS. She brings a diverse set of experiences to her new role. Kathryn holds the equivalent of an Associate Degree in Secretarial Arts from Mount Royal University, as well as two years of special education studies at the University of Alberta. Kathryn has been an aide at East and Henderson High Schools in the West Chester Area School District and ARC of Chester County, as well as a librarian at the Singapore American School. Previously, she held a wide variety of administrative and customer facing roles including, most recently, at Wawa and Malvern Bank. Kathryn is married to one of TCS' mathematics teachers, Mr. Burtch. She has two grown sons, a daughter-in-law, and a grandson. She also is the grandmother of TCS' part-time security dog, Jasper. Fun fact: Kathryn was born at a Canadian military hospital in France.

**Christopher Brady** - I am a recent 2022 grad from Cabrini University with a bachelors in secondary education, certified in Social Studies 7-12. While working on my studies in college, I played collegiate lacrosse as a goalie and took part in making program history through winning the National Championship title. I have many different interests, but specifically enjoy and hope to emphasize through my teaching, the histories of different cultures and peoples.

**Lauren Schwind** is originally from Houston Texas and nurtured her passion for art by going to school at The Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah Georgia, where she graduated magna cum laude with a BFA in illustration and a minor in painting in 2013. After school she would go on to begin teaching adult and children's classes in the Savannah area before moving up to Philadelphia PA in 2017. Once established in the big city with her now husband, she began working in Philly classrooms in 2018. Previously teaching with Mastery, Schwind now shares her passion for art and nature alike in her classroom here. Using art as a form of meditation, emotional regulation, and an overall outlet for their feelings to support students with channeling what is coming up for them emotionally and empowering them to use art as part of their self-care tool kit.

**Donna Marie Zoccoli** - I am married with two children. I have a B.S. in Mathematics and Accounting from St. Joseph's University and I have been teaching mathematics for 16 years. My Pennsylvania Teaching Certification is Mathematics grades 7 - 12. I also have experience teaching high school chemistry and French 101. My first career was in the business world, primarily in the pharmaceuticals industry, where my favorite job was being an international corporate auditor in which I had the wonderful opportunity of traveling around the United States and to eight foreign countries. My hobbies are learning foreign languages, crafting, and decorating. I am very enthusiastic about teaching the wonderful students at The Concept School and working with all the excellent administration and teachers.



At the conclusion of this past school year, we did an activity as a school community on the blacktop. There was a Gecko slip with each staff/student's name scattered around the entire area. I first asked everyone to find their own Gecko slip without speaking or helping anyone else. Everyone walked around, searching for the slip

with their name on it. I timed it and it took about two and a half minutes.

Then, we did it again. Only this time, I said everyone was allowed to pick up someone else's Gecko slip and give it to them. When we began, everyone immediately started speaking to one another and passing slips around. It was a flurry of communication and cooperation.

Everyone had their own Gecko slip in less than a minute!

The lesson of this activity is that when a community works together, we each gain something individually. In fact, what you want as an individual may come quicker if you're willing to help someone else. One of my favorite quotes is from the true book/movie *Into the Wild* and was scribbled by its protagonist in his diary. He had learned through his extended isolation that, "Happiness only real when shared."



The start of this school year has been complete with the sharing of happiness through cooperation, respect, and kindness. I know that we will continue to support one another as a school community through both the easy days and the challenging ones. As the Gecko slip activity proved, problems are often easier to solve when we are willing to work together and have each other's backs.

Mr. Schullery  
TCS Counselor





**Chester County College Fair**  
**October 17, 2022**  
**5:30 - 8:00 PM**  
**Free Admission**  
**United Sports Training Center**  
**1426 Marshallton Thorndale Road**  
**Downingtown, PA 19335**

More information and registration - <https://www.cciu.org/college-fair>

# TCS UKRAINE FUNDRAISER

April 1st-30th, 2022

- HELP LOCAL ANIMALS WITH FOOD DONATIONS
- HELP INTERNATIONAL HUMANE SOCIETY WITH CASH DONATIONS OR CHECKS MADE OUT TO TCS

DONATE CANNED FOOD, DRY FOOD, AND MONETARY DONATIONS FROM 4/1-4/30/2022

## TCS Ukraine Fundraiser

Thank you to everyone who donated to the TCS Fundraiser for the Humane Society International and the local SPCA. As a result of your generosity, TCS raised over \$1,734 in cash and animal food (134 pounds). Soon, TCS has transferred the cash to the Humane Society International and the food to the local SPCA in West Chester, PA so that abandoned animals can feel some relief.

Given TCS is a small school, the Fundraiser was a great success! The Fundraiser was aided in part by *The Jasper Challenges* that helped encourage families to donate money on behalf of their animal family members. Jasper Burtch, the initial challenger, was joined on *The Jasper Challenge Wall of Honor* by another 23 animals including 16 dogs, 5 cats, 1 chinchilla and 1 turtle. In addition, funds were raised through the sale of customized key chains and homemade [peanut butter] dog treats.

Thank you again to everyone who donated to help make the TCS Fundraiser for Abandoned Animals in Ukraine and here at home a great success!





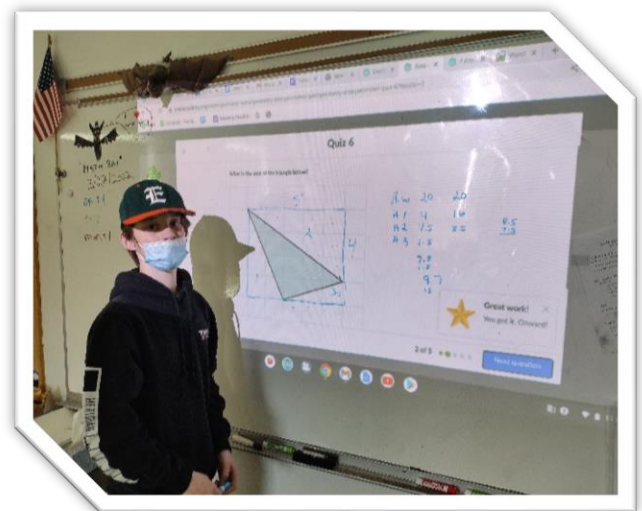


**2021/2022 school year**

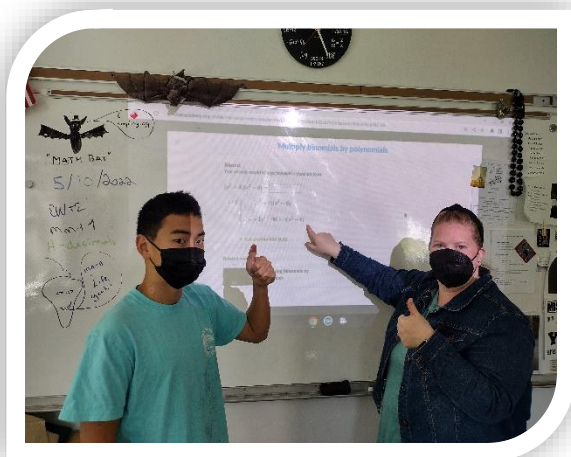
### **In Mr. Burtch's Math class:**

**Joey earns 98 percent and a Jarritos!**

On his Geometry quiz. He stepped through it step by step, wrote down formulae and interim step, and checked his work. Well done. His prize is chilling in the fridge.



Ms. Wright helped Mitchell Shin multiply binomials and polynomials. The TCS ELA team went the extra mile. It figures.

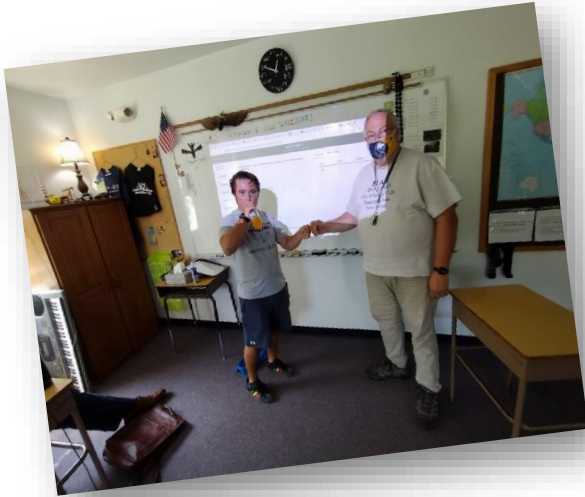


John Krajicek, look out! New student, Harley Syracuse, is stepping up their math game.



## ***This school year in Mr. Burtch's class:***

Mitchell wins watermelon and grapefruit Jarritos for two A quality quizzes.



James Lyons deeply involved in math and loving it!



Jack Ryan enjoying the sweet taste of success in Geometry! Jack earned a mango flavored Jarritos for an A+. Well done, Jack. Mr. Burtch is proud of you.

## **In Mrs. Griffith's English classes:**

Mrs. Griffith's First Period ELA class is continuing its study of *Frankenstein* and have been exploring mentor texts like Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", Donne's *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*, and Blake's "Tyger, Tyger" and "The Lamb".

Her Second and Fourth Period ELA classes are continuing their author study of Gary Paulsen. They chose to read the alternate ending to *Hatchet* titled *Brian's Winter* and are deciding if they could survive on their own in the wilderness. As the weather is getting warmer, we have been spending time in the nature center reading and foresting. We have followed deer tracks, noticed where good shelters could be made, observed patterns in leaves, felt the wind on our cheeks, described stillness, and even found a fully intact doe skeleton serendipitously coinciding with a chapter about a doe!

Mrs. Griffith's Sixth Period ELA class has concluded its study of *Hamilton* and are sharing their thoughts in writing about the following: "What will your legacy be?", "What will you do with your "dash"?", "What did we learn about the narratives among all the major characters in the story?", "What did we learn about telling story through theater?" and finally, "Who are we more alike: Burr or Hamilton?" We will close out the year by reading Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.

Mrs. Griffith's Seventh Period ELA class is continuing its reading of Sara Pennypacker's novel *Pax* and having great discussions about where we feel most at home, what we know at our core, the coiling snake of anxiety, and friendship.



## In Mrs. Wright's English classes:

### ELA Spotlight:



Students in **Mrs. Wright's** classes are immersed in various literature genres. Some are working through the last novel they will read for the year and others have taken a dive into poetry. We have zeroed in on spoken-word poetry and blackout (found) poetry.

A big **"thank you"** to Mrs. Griffith for forwarding along the NCTE's daily poetry picks, without her we would not have discovered Canadian Poet, Shane Koyczan! Since reading a few of Shane's poems, we have been working on crafting poetry from excerpts from *Murder on the Orient Express*, *The Outsiders*, and from newspapers and magazines.

A group of students are hard at work using their creative writing skills in a **"Digital Writing Journal"** where they respond to a daily prompt that both encourages, elevates, and challenges their thinking and writing. These prompts are carefully and individually crafted for each student!

### THEATER DIALOGUE :

Thursday, June 2, 2022

### SPRING ARTS FESTIVAL

Doors open at 6:15pm

TCS' *Murder on the Orient Express*

**SHOWTIME: 7:00PM**

The TCS Players are on a roll with rehearsals for our production of *Murder on the Orient Express*! We have taken to the stage and rehearsals are underway. Mrs. Culler, Mrs. Griffith, and Mrs. Wright are all so excited and pleased with what students have accomplished so far!

Through the kindness of lending materials, we have bountiful options for actor's wardrobes, accessories, and luggage! Thank you to Mrs. Culler's mother for thinking of our theater club!



Tor looking for an excerpt to create a Blackout Poem in Mrs. Wright's class!

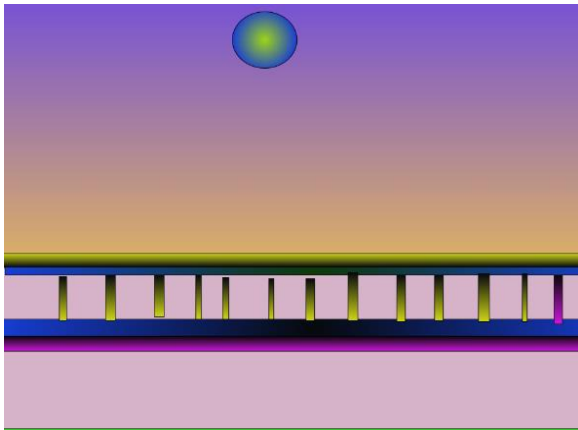


***This school year in Mrs. Wright's class:***



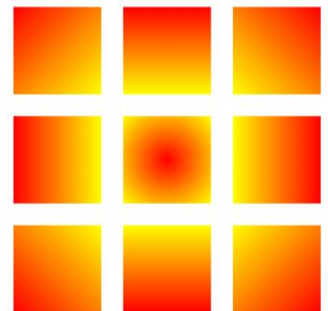
## In Mrs. Frederick's classes this year:

Mrs. Fredericks' 3D Printing Class has been learning the basics of 3D printing and how to use the 3D printer. They completed their first 3d prints: nameplates with raised letters and nameplates with indented letters. They did an awesome job!



Mrs. Fredericks' Game Design Classes have been learning how to find a backdrop and sprites, and the basics of having the sprites move. They know how to have the "costumes" change (animation) during the game. They know how to have the backgrounds change from the main game to a background for losing the game and a background for winning the game. We are learning how to create our own backgrounds and sprites. Soon they will learn how to score in the game using variables.

Mrs. Fredericks' Coding class is learning the basics of Python. They know how to use coordinates on the page, how to draw a rectangle with coordinates, and how to change colors including fills, gradient fills, borders, and border widths. Next, we will learn how to create circles, ovals, stars, polygons, and other shapes.





## *New walking path at TCS*

Construction is complete and we now have a wider, safer walking path and new basketball court on site.

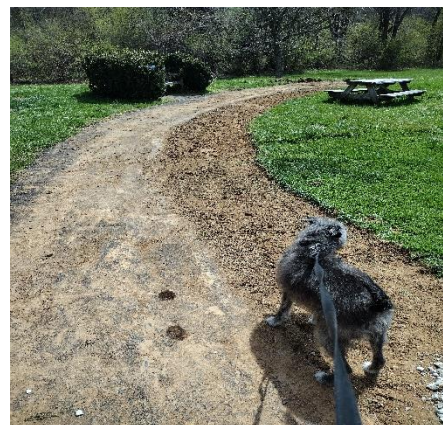


Stump hidden under grass between building and court.

Path to the basketball court takes shape as underlying gravel bed is compacted.



Jasper standing in as "Owner's Rep" on this job





## The Cast of TCS' *Murder on The Orient Express* Rehearsing!

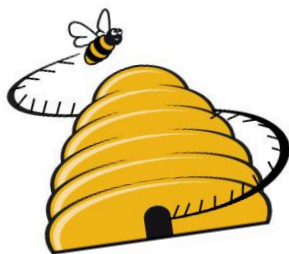


# Board Game Club

## Tabletop Game Club



### *Bee update...*



Jack McMichael (our beekeeper) has generously been keeping our bee colony safe and sound as we await replacement parts for our observational beehive. They will be reinstalled in October. He joined us the following week for an informational presentation all about honeybees.



# Virtual Parent Meeting

**Wednesday, October 26, 2022**

**7PM - 8PM**

**Speaker: Jean Ruttenberg**

**To Register email Marti Phillips - [mphillips@theconceptschoool.org](mailto:mphillips@theconceptschoool.org) and you will be sent a link to join the meeting.**

**Send your questions in advance to [mphillips@theconceptschoool.org](mailto:mphillips@theconceptschoool.org) and Jean will be able to choose a topic and answer your questions during the meeting.**

## Jean Ruttenberg, MA



My extensive experiences have demonstrated the importance of quickly uniting with the individual or family seeking help to understand and address their concerns. I am a well-known specialist in the areas of autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, emotional and behavioral problems, and couples' issues. I serve all age groups and I am especially recognized for my experience working with adolescents and adults with autism and ADHD. I deliver service where it is most needed, which can be in the home, community, or educational setting. This includes attendance at an IEP, school conference, or a staff training as needed.

Prior to joining The Center for Neuropsychology & Counseling, I served as Executive Director of the Center for Autism for over 25 years. Under my leadership, the Center for Autism received the 2000 American Psychiatric Association's Significant Achievement Award, a national award which recognized the quality of treatment the Center provided. In 2008, I was awarded Villanova University's Graduate Alumni Award for demonstrated excellence in my

professional field. I have also been a frequent guest and contributor on Fox, ABC, and CBS to discuss topical issues on autism.

I hold a dual Master's degree in Special Education & Counseling, as well as, being certified in Family Studies. I strive to merge my extensive knowledge and experience to work with families and couples in using practical strategies to address stressful issues. My knowledge is enriched and inspired by the individuals and families I have the pleasure to engage.

In addition to being a key spokesperson on autism at the state and local level, I provide consultation and training to school districts, agencies, and county programs throughout the Delaware Valley.

# ***TCS Picture Gallery***

## *TCS Supports the Ukraine*



## Music T-Shirt Day





## *2022 Senior Farewell Dance*







