

Pride in Our Schools

November/December 2014

We are very proud of our students and staff.

Woodland students in the Kindergarten classes of Amy Jordan-Eitelberg and Susan Leonard celebrated a Thanksgiving Feast in November. While they kept with the tradition of expressing gratitude and sharing a meal together, this year the students also focused on a food drive. They carefully collected food for the needy. As the donations grew, the youngsters felt proud of how their efforts positively impacted the community. The food was donated to the Center of Great Expectations of Somerset County.



The sixth annual “Art at NJEA” exhibit was a special collection of student work that was on display at the New Jersey Educators Association Conference in Atlantic City. Each art teacher in New Jersey who is a member of the AENJ (Art Educators of New Jersey) was allowed to submit pieces from grades PreK - 12. This range in age provided a wide and wonderful sampling of student artwork. Central School’s Art teacher, Becky Davenport, was thrilled to have the following students celebrated with artwork on display: Grace Beard from Jackie Buckley’s class, Ryan Liu from Rebecca DeMarco’s class, and Annie Dong from Nicole Evins’ class.

Under the direction of their supervisor Michelle Zgombic, Warren Middle School’s Student Tech Support (STS) Team 7 hosted a Makey Makey workshop for the 6th grade Science classes of Simone Miller and Michele Tanzi. The STS team presented the Makey Makey device, which is a kit that can turn any inanimate object into arrow



keys from a computer using Internet websites, and the principles of conductivity. Activity lab stations were set up in the library, so students could not only see the Makey Makey in action, but try it out themselves. Run by STS members on both Team 7 and Team 8, these labs included a drum kit and piano, as well as games like Super Mario and Pac-Man.

The buddy bench is a new addition to Mt. Horeb recess. If someone is sitting on the bench it signals to other students that he/she would like someone to play with, and children can invite those on the buddy bench to join an activity! Principal Cook introduced the idea to students a few weeks ago and it has allowed many children the chance to be involved and interact more with their peers during recess. Mt. Horeb students are eager to help others and the buddy bench promotes altruism and other positive social behaviors while preventing social isolation.

During the first week of school, 1st grade students at Angelo L. Tomaso School planted lettuce seeds in the Indoor Garden Grow Lab, which was purchased through a school grant. The children carefully watered the soil and made lighting adjustments for the amount of warmth the plants required. Along with their teachers, Karen Wilkening and Elena Marinello, they monitored the plants' growth daily. After 45 days, the students harvested and cleaned the organic lettuce in anticipation of an exciting event; the entire first grade enjoyed eating their school-grown salads together!



At the start of December, Warren Middle School held its annual school wide Geography Bee, which is sponsored by National Geographic. Facilitated by Susan Cooper, the Geo Bee is a 50 multiple-choice question exam which covers a variety of geography topics. Congratulations to the following top 11 students who answered between 43-47 out of 50 questions correctly and advanced to the second level: Ruitao Chen, Devika Govindarajan, Roopa Irakam, Niharika Iyer, Zach Martini, Mayur Sharma, Brandon Tang, Neelay Trivedi, Neha Venkatesh, Luke Viera, and Alan Wang. Special congratulations to eighth-grader Neelay, who became the school champion and will advance once again to try to qualify for the state competition. We look forward to the History Bee in January 2015, which follows a similar format.



Prior to Thanksgiving, all of the 1st graders at Woodland School celebrated with a “Crazy for Cranberries” day. During this event, students participated in several math and science activities using cranberries. Between the classrooms of Anita Brower and Dorothy Stolfi, the children rotated through stations with the help of volunteers. Students made predictions about the buoyancy of cranberries in water. They scooped up different amounts of cranberries to use estimation skills, and then counted exact totals to compare with their estimates. To investigate whether the cranberries were ripe or not, the students performed a bounce test. They also used a scale to practice math skills. Teamwork was a must, for this fun experience!



The "Home is Where the Heart Is" project was organized by Guidance Counselor Patricia Morris and a group called PALs (Peer Assistance Leaders). This group is dedicated to developing service learning projects within Central School and the local community. Fifth grade students collected clothes for homeless families for the holiday season. They decorated this collection house over the course of two weeks and took pride in working together on the project. Additionally, the Character Education

Committee organized a “helping hands” activity to support positive interactions, reinforce anti-bullying initiatives, and promote a climate of kindness. Each student was invited to share how he/she can be a good friend, help in the classroom, and assist if someone is being bullied. Check out the displays which are hung in the APR and glass hallway in the 4th/5th grade wing.

The Literacy Committee at Mt. Horeb School designated a home to celebrate school-wide reading and writing success. This festive circus themed bulletin board is next to the main office for all to see. It will celebrate student achievements from each grade and classroom throughout the year. Special thanks to Laurie Green who made the committee's vision become a reality, as well as to the following Literacy Committee members: Kristen Stoyanov, Becky Maag , Denise Kennedy, Stacey Lederman, Lisa Lukko, Jill Ziobro, Chris Burkhardt, Michelle Cebula, Kara Miletic, and Scott Cook.



ALT School was proud to sponsor their 3rd annual Adopt-A-Family campaign. All who participated purchased specific items for very needy children. All of these children are part of the Greater Brunswick Charter School Backpack Program which makes certain they have food each and every weekend. There was a lot of generous support for this project in making sure the children will receive gifts of clothing this winter.



At Warren Middle School, Susan Cooper and Lynn Degen are the advisors to a group of 20 strong peer leaders. Together, they support the students by facilitating presentations from a variety of service organizations to help the youth develop leadership skills. Recently, Neal Drasin from the Warren Lions Club visited the middle school to speak about that organization. The following week, Lisa Galondardo from the United Way of North Jersey presented on ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), which represents individuals who are dealing with many challenges and struggles.

Club advisor Christina Beekman and members of the Woodland Service Club are an active group! This fall they collected \$200 for UNICEF. For their second project they set to task making holiday ornaments; all of the proceeds went to benefit the Somerset County Soup Kitchen. They also collected mugs, packages of soup, instant oatmeal, and hot chocolate to create "Mugs for Warmth" for the South Bound Brook Soup Kitchen. As Ms. Beekman said, "Happy Holidays! Let's make it happy for someone else too!"



Central School's secretary Jane Auriemma is involved with a lot of community outreach. For the past 20 years, she has been collecting candy from Warren Township schools and nearby towns like Branchburg, Bridgewater, and Hillsborough. With the help from Girl Scout Troops #65816 and #65476, almost 700 Christmas stockings were filled with donated Halloween candy. This year, all of the stockings were cut out and sewn by Jane Auriemma and Mary Kovac, who is a Paraprofessional at Warren Middle School. The stockings were distributed to needy children through Metro World Child. Both in and out of school, the children of Warren Township display an attitude of kindness and a giving spirit!



The Warren Township Education Foundation has established the following three committees: funding sources, goals, and marketing. The members discussed several possible goals, both short-term and long-term, that will impact all schools within the district. They have decided to join a statewide Education Foundation organization as well. If you are interested in being a part of the WTEF as a volunteer, please contact Tanya McAusland at tmcausland@verizon.net.



Students in Kara Miletic's science classes have become real masters when it comes to mixtures and solutions. After studying solubility and concentration, they began to test chemical reactions. Through experimentation and a teacher's watchful eye, students were challenged to analyze a variety of reactants. Once a universal solvent was added, these young scientists watched and recorded their observations. Bubble! Pop! Fizz! Once they examined the final products, they were able to tell which had formed a precipitate, or new substance.

The Battle of the Books program is underway in Warren Township schools. All fifth graders in the district are participating in this reading program. Each student is placed on a team with five or six other children, and each team is responsible for reading 15 amazing novels. A few of the favorite titles on this year's list are Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio by Peg Kehret, A Week in the Woods by Andrew Clements, and Theodore Boone: Kid Lawyer by John Grisham. The teams have until the end of April to read the books, at which time the Battle competition begins. The winning teams from each of the elementary schools will face off against each other in the District Battle held at the end of May. The program has become so popular throughout the years that many teacher teams have been created too. For example, at ALT School, 20 teachers and staff members have already begun reading the Battle of the Books titles!

In conjunction with the book fair, Central School hosted a "Me and My Guy: Bedtime with Books" event. Many students and fathers came in their pajamas to an evening of story time. Two authors, Corey Rosen Schwartz and Dr. Vanita Braver, read to the audience along with Library Media Specialist Lindsay Chell and Principal Milita. It was a great night to celebrate reading!



Congratulations to Cathleen Luo, whose Lions Club peace poster was chosen as the 1st place contest winner. Subsequently, Cathleen's poster also won 1st place at the district level and will now advance to the state level. Her artistic skills and talent is evident, as is her message promoting peace. Her artwork has received a lot of positive feedback throughout the district and Warren Township community. Good luck!



As a result of Cliff Sunflower's presentation on honeybees during last year's Science Day, Central School students and friends from Cub Scout Den 15-Pack 182, completed a Bee Box service project. Inspired by what they learned about the vanishing bees, the boys built the bee box, painted it, and helped to install it at the Wagner's Farm Giving Garden with the hopes of making a difference and helping the bees. Den leader Jennifer Guarino explained the honeybees' role in food production, and when students pass by the farm, they can see the bee box and know that it will help with pollinating the plants that the Central students planted last spring in the Community Giving Garden.

Congratulations to Inica Kotasthane from ALT School. She won the Star Reader contest sponsored by Scholastic Inc. It was open to all 4th-6th grade students across the United States. She completed an essay and was invited by Scholastic to read a new novel and complete a book review which will be featured in one of their publications! Additionally, Inica was selected as Grand Prize winner of Scholastic Reading Club's Jedi Academy Newspaper Writing, when she wrote about her involvement with Battle of the Books. The Jedi Academy creator Jeffrey Brown will be drawing her as a Padawan... which fans of Star Wars can certainly appreciate!



Preschool has been busy this month at Mt. Horeb. Families were surveyed about how they celebrate the various winter holidays; children have been sharing about their traditions and celebrations. Opportunities like this are terrific for enhancing vocabulary, language skills, and social interactions. The students in Carol Keirstead's and Tara Keller's classes used their artistic skills to paint a variety of holiday pictures, as well as had a lot of fun dancing to the Reindeer Hokey Pokey using the SmartBoard.

Dannine Albanese's Character Education group collected items for teens for the Somerset Home for Temporarily Displaced Children. Her students wanted to promote "teens helping other teens". Additionally, Bev MacGorman and the Warren Middle School Student Government Association held a coat drive called "Wrapped in Love by the United Way". They collected winter apparel to help make the season warmer and brighter for struggling families in Somerset County. Over the next few weeks the SGA will begin to research charities. Each year Warren Middle School hosts a Walk-a-Thon and this year the theme is HOPE. The proceeds will be donated to a charity working on research towards finding a cure. The SGA raises awareness of service, as well as helps those in need.



What does Woodland School have in common with a famous architect? Recently, our Buildings and Grounds Supervisor Tyler Tribelhorn toured the iconic Fallingwater in Mill Run, PA, one of Frank Lloyd Wright's most famous designs. He made the correlation between the colors there and the colors our architect chose. This year Woodland was reconditioned and repainted using

the Frank Lloyd Wright color palette. The windows are Cherokee Red, the stucco is Bone White, and the wooden eaves are Covered Wagon. Check it out on your next trip to Woodland School!

Warren Middle School ~ Students of the Month

Congratulations to recent award recipients for their demonstration of positive character traits.



October recipients on left:

Back (L to R): Tyler Lipton, Anna Seidel, Christina Porcelli, Arianna Valenti, and Connor Dube
Front (L to R): Christian Galdi, Stephanie Vagelos, and Saayom Ghosh

November recipients on right:

Back (L to R): Sarah Bruno, Ariana Stoddard, Grant Paylago, and Robert Galbraith
Front (L to R): Kaitlyn Roth, Roopa Irakam, Arnav Patel, and Kelly Fitzgerald

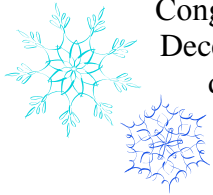


Would you like to help? ALT students are collecting items to send to TerraCycle, an international upcycling and recycling company that repurposes materials into affordable products. They are collecting tape dispensers and plastic tape cores, as well as cell phones (flip phones, Smartphones, Blackberries, iPhones, etc). Your donations will keep these items from ending up in a landfill, and participation will help improve ALT's outdoor classroom, Nature's Pathway.

There is a lot to cheer about! Warren Middle School's cheerleading team, coached by Shannon O'Shea, brings Warren Township spirit to both the girls and boys basketball games! They support the teams at all home games. Already, these 6th and 7th graders have learned 13 cheers and a half-time show routine. As a former competitive gymnast and gymnastics coach, Mrs. O'Shea said, "Our cheer squad is full of energy and spunk. They work hard, and have fun!" If you want to come cheer on the basketball teams, games are on the following dates in December: 15, 17, 18 and 22. Special thanks to Tatiana and Ariana Salerno who assist Coach O'Shea. GO TEAM!



Shriners Hospital also has something to cheer about! Three years ago, Woodland's Adam Yenish and Linda Pepe, along with the generosity and help of members of the Warren Township community, created the Raise Your Glass Foundation to raise awareness and funding for children with special needs. As a result of two galas and two golf outings, the Raise Your Glass Foundation has donated a total of \$135,000 to Shriners Hospital for Children in Philadelphia!



Congratulations to Central's Music teacher Jennifer Kaniuka! In nearby Dunellen, on December 6th and 7th, she debuted a holiday musical piece that she composed and directed. Her composition was inclusive of instrumental and vocal components. She has over 20 pieces that she has composed in her portfolio, but this was her first composition to be publicly introduced.

Staff Spotlights...

Meet staff who, in addition to educators, play an important role in students' education.

Warren Middle School welcomed Lauren Lee in March of 2014 as Coordinator of Guidance Services. She provides administrative support for the Dean of Students, Max Achteau, as well as for the three Guidance Counselors at the middle school level. Ms. Lee is a helpful point person for parents, students, and staff regarding information involving the Guidance Department and available services. Some of her job responsibilities include the following: developing student schedules, maintaining student records, sending report cards and honor roll letters home, as well as handling Student of the Month celebrations. Her knowledge of technology and related skills have been instrumental to the success of the recent Chromebook distribution. Ms. Lee is dedicated to helping staff and she greets every student with a smile!



Unsung heroes! The custodial team at Mt. Horeb School is comprised of David Marin, Kykeo Sysongdeth, Carrie Vongvilay and Brett Dagnall. Leading the group with 32 years in district, Brett is Head Custodian of the building. Kykeo, David, and Carrie are all dedicated staff as well, with 13, 12, and 9 years respectively. On a daily basis they clean all of the classrooms and common areas to keep our students healthy. They also work hand-in-hand with our teaching staff on various projects and keep on top of maintenance and repairs. They maintain close contact with Facilities Manager Tyler Tribelhorn and Principal Cook to ensure that everyone is kept in the loop about important matters. Without these four individuals working together as a team, Mt. Horeb School would not be the sparkling gem that it is. From glistening floors to immaculate lunch tables, they do it all with a sense of pride, knowing that they are contributing to the greater good of the staff and students.



Carrie Grapstein (left) has worked in the Business Office for 15 years as a Bookkeeper, and while she assists with an array of tasks, her primary responsibility is payroll. She works with the Assistant Business Administrator and is the point person when an employee has questions about his/her pay stub, deductions, or direct deposit. Mrs. Grapstein reviews timesheets, calculates substitute pay, and oversees stipend reimbursements. Additionally, she is responsible for administering tax sheltered annuity plans and completing verbal and written employment

verifications. Nancy Becker (right) has worked for Warren Township for 17 years. In her role coordinating health benefits she is the expert on medical, dental, and disability benefit options. She also handles Workers Compensation claims. Mrs. Becker works in conjunction with Ameriflex to manage Flexible Spending (FSA) for all staff who choose to participate, and is careful to email staff updates to benefits information. Under her Human Resource functions Mrs. Becker handles medical and maternity leaves, helping staff with FMLA, NJFLA and Child Rearing. She is also the point person for new staff enrolled in the Provisional Teacher Program as they obtain their Standard certificates.

Mrs. Jan Donlay was hired in October 2012 as Transportation Coordinator. Over the last 24 years she developed her career within Transportation; beginning as a driver, Mrs. Donlay worked her way up through the New Jersey Transportation Supervisors Certification Program at Rutgers University. Within our school district, Mrs. Donlay works with the Business Administrator and Building & Grounds Supervisor. She oversees twenty employees in the Transportation Department and holds training sessions for drivers and bus monitors as required by the State of New Jersey. Together, they review best practice in safety and behavior management. Partnering with the Fred Dealaman Bus Company, Mrs. Donlay manages routes and ridership. The safety of Warren Township students is her primary goal on a daily basis. She is always available to parents who may have concerns about changes, or need an explanation about bus routes.



As a secretary in the Office of the Superintendent, Mrs. Linda Miller has supported four Superintendents over the past 19 years. She currently assists Dr. Tami Crader, as well as all Warren Township staff on a daily basis. Mrs. Miller fields Aesop questions and carefully maintains accurate attendance. She manages pre-authorization of graduate courses and tuition reimbursement, confirms movement on the salary guide, and sends district eBlasts. Mrs. Miller receives and routes phone calls, and handles numerous clerical tasks for the Board of Education overall. She is the friendly face who welcomes new substitutes working for Warren Township Schools. With her patience and good-natured personality, the Board Office is lucky to have such a special employee.

After working as a Paraprofessional for 15 years at Central School, and for the Special Services Department after that, Anne Frank (left) became Secretary at Woodland School in April 2014. She works hard to make sure each day runs smoothly. Mrs. Frank assists the Principal daily, manages staff attendance and substitutes, submits purchase orders, maintains student and staff files, coordinates building use, and sends eBlasts. She is an important part of assisting with practice safety drills, a friendly face to help our children feel safe. The staff, students, and parents appreciate her enthusiastic smile and helpful personality. Her partner in the Main Office, Sue Francione (right), joined the Warren Township staff as a Multi-Duty Paraprofessional in late April 2014. She begins each day as the resident greeter, standing at the front door to welcome students to a



fresh, new day! Mrs. Francione is responsible for student attendance and sign-out logs, as well as collecting all notes regarding pick up, early dismissal, etc. She creates the after-school club rosters and tracks various permission slips. Not only does Mrs. Francione work to keep the office in check, but she also helps to supervise recess each day. It is obvious that Mrs. Francione enjoys working with children. She has an upbeat personality and is a dedicated employee. Both Mrs. Frank and Mrs. Francione are invaluable members of Woodland School. Principal Heaney often expresses, "They are truly the glue that holds the office together."

MaryGrace Suitovsky joined the Business Office in 2003 and is currently the district's Assistant Business Administrator. She works diligently with Carrie Grapstein to ensure a smooth payroll for employees and substitutes. Mrs. Suitovsky works with the Division of Pensions and Benefits and all staff, to handle pension matters and Family Leave Insurance. She manages accounting and financial reporting as well. Helping with the financials throughout each month is Ruth Davies. As Treasurer of School Monies for the past 31 years, Mrs. Davies reconciles receipts and deposits with bank account statements and additionally signs checks. An integral part of the Business Office is Marne Angarola who has worked for the Board of Education Administrative Offices for 22 years. She reviews and prepares purchase orders so that staff and students have all of the materials they need. Along with Mrs. Suitovsky, she makes sure that the district's bills are paid in a timely fashion and that all required documentation is in place. Mrs. Angarola handles numerous accounts, funds, and vendors including School Specialty orders and packing slips.



"The district's brand of "shining brighter every day" continues to inspire and support the exemplary work of our students and staff." ~ Dr. Tami Crader, Superintendent

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Have you selected
a book for
winter break yet?



Have a safe
and joyous
holiday season!