

# Pride in Our Schools

October 2014

We are very proud of our students and staff.

Possessing a wealth of knowledge, our educators are always eager to share with others. This summer, Warren Middle School's Barbara LaSaracina spoke on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) at the National Teachers Convention in Philadelphia, PA. She felt fortunate to have been one of the scholarship recipients for the program. Charlotte Danielson and the US Secretary of Education were also speakers at the conference. ALT School's Donna Pellagrino led a workshop at the Art Teachers Annual Convention in Long Branch, NJ, this October. She presented 3-D Papermaking, an original lesson combining artistic creations with an innovative way of using recycled materials. She realized that the plastic packaging often used to protect everyday items could be a mold for paper pulp, which picks up all of the detail and when removed becomes a paper object. Her fellow art teachers created a background for these paper creations at the culmination of their project. It was clear to every Art teacher there, that the possibilities are endless when using this technique. Occupational Therapists Laurie Donovan and Alison Hales are looking forward to presenting at the NJEA Conference in November. Their presentation is "Fine Motor Matters in the Young School Aged Child." They are also offering workshops locally through the Somerset County Library System.

## Warren Middle School ~ Students of the Month

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

6<sup>th</sup> grade - Emily Morris and Daniel Edelman

7<sup>th</sup> grade - Nicole Harris and Patrick Alto

8<sup>th</sup> grade - Rebecca Fenton and Jeffrey Zhang

Unified Arts - Ruchi Biswas and Alan Lin



Thank you to our Warren Township families who diligently completed their InfoSnap forms. InfoSnap provided parents a chance to review district information and to update student information quickly and efficiently, prior to the beginning of the school year. There were 14 required policies and documents including Medical Information, Student Acceptable Use Policy, Milk/Juice Purchases, and Media/Yearbook Agreements. Utilizing InfoSnap has considerably reduced the amount of paper used, as well as data entry time for school employees. Special thanks to Ashley Peterson and Mary Ellen Roberts who assisted with the transition to InfoSnap.

As part of a 17 person outreach team, to Guadalajara, Mexico, to work with an area called the Colie. One project children would eagerly arrive each grew to reach 400! Activities included



ALT's Elena Marinello traveled many underprivileged children in was to run a summer camp. The morning, and the enrollment puppet shows, crafts, sports,

chalk art, painting, and dancing. They were given supplies, snacks, prizes, toys, and more... compassion and understanding, while being able to experience the simple joys of being a child.



The STS Team 8 is poised and ready to help staff and students this year! Our talented Student Tech Support team members were pioneers last year, starting a group in Warren Middle School that allowed students to take on a tech support role. Under the leadership of Michelle Zgombic, this group will continue to troubleshoot problems and investigate resources that will help teachers and students alike. A new team of STS members will be nominated soon to create an STS Team 7.

Prior to receiving their Science kits at Woodland School, Gina Cocivera-Wright and Linda Pepe created lessons involving teamwork and creativity. After reading Bartholomew and the Oobleck, students made their own mixtures, as they dabbled with solids and liquids. Their experimentation lent itself to recording observations and working collaboratively.



In a subsequent lesson written by colleague Mary Pat Brown, the children were given basic household items and asked to put their problem-solving skills to work. With the objective of keeping an egg raised to a specific height, students built a variety of structures in small groups, realizing that trial and error, as well as brainstorming, would be the key to their success!



Mt. Horeb School's Character Education kick-off was an inspirational assembly called Rachel's Challenge. Its message focused on a school culture of kindness and thoughtfulness. Afterwards, Buddy Classes met and worked together on their first project of the year, starting a "chain reaction of goodness". Making kindness hearts together, buddies had the opportunity to share ways they are kind to family, friends, and others. You never know when one word, one gesture, or one act can make a difference and start a chain reaction of good... What can you do today?



The 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade Chromebook distribution took place last month. The entire process was successfully accomplished in less than 30 minutes, thanks to the combined efforts of Robert Comba, Max Achtau, Lynn Alger, Ken Creedon, Lance Riegler, and Michelle Zgombic. Students began utilizing their Chromebooks for a variety of types of instruction including collaboration on projects, labs, note-taking, writing, and more. Additionally, all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students throughout the district received their

Chromebooks too. Students will utilize this technology to enhance their learning by visiting district licensed resources such as Spelling City, EduTyping, ThinkCentral, Brain Pop, Study Island, GlogsterEDU, and RAZ Kids! The Chromebooks will also allow students to create documents, spreadsheets, and presentations using Google Drive.

At Warren Middle School, Lynn Alger's Broadcast Journalism class has begun to air WMS News segments for staff and students to enjoy. Fourteen students create and produce the segments, reporting on activities, events, and sports around the school. This Electives class also focuses on enhancing public speaking and interviewing skills, as well as using photo and editing software to engage their viewers.



*Mark your calendars. All are welcome to attend!*

**October 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Mount Horeb School at 2 p.m. and Warren Middle School at 7:00 p.m.**

Curriculum supervisors will provide an overview of the PARCC assessment which will be administered in NJ in the spring of 2015.

**November 13<sup>th</sup>**

**ALT School at 7:00 p.m.**

Math consultant Nancy Schultz, of Conquer Mathematics, will provide participants an overview of mathematics within the Common Core curriculum.



Warren Township staff members have community spirit! At the end of September, over 30 Warren teachers and paraprofessionals from Central, Mt. Horeb, Woodland and Warren Middle participated in the Miracles for Myeloma Walk/Run in support of multiple myeloma and cancer research. The event took place in Clark, New Jersey, with people of all ages participating. Over \$7,000 was raised for this great cause by the Warren Township team, and over \$105,000 was raised in all. That same day, Kathy Boraski, Deanna DeRoner and Catherine Murphy participated in a run to raise funds for Steps Together, an organization based

in nearby Hillsborough that provides support and financial assistance for families with significant medical needs. The three ALT teachers also completed either a 5K or 10K race. We are so proud of all of our staff members for their continued generosity and outreach endeavors.

Shruthi Shankar, a 4<sup>th</sup> grader at Central School, took the SCAT, a precursor to the classic SAT. Scoring at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in both Math and Verbal, she qualified for the high honors award which she will receive from Johns Hopkins this spring. She and Central School staff were invited to attend. Congratulations!





Alexis Slack's 8th grade Spanish class students experienced the great taste of Latin American culture right in Warren Middle School. They created and sampled various types of "licuados". Licuados can be compared to smoothies, except they are much healthier, lighter, and have a lot less sugar. The ingredients in licuados include the following: fresh fruit, ice, and a splash of juice. The students enjoyed concocting different mixtures with banana, coconut, pineapple, strawberry, orange, mango, and papaya. Los estudiantes de Warren Township... ¡Brillando Más Todos Los Días!

Kindergartners in the classes of Rebecca DeMarco, Christina DeShields, and Andrea McGuire are working on fine and gross motors skills. In addition to classroom practice, they gather once a week with their teachers in the gym. Along with Laura Lamson they practice skipping and galloping, as well as the army crawl, bear crawl, and crab walk. These are a great way to build up core muscles, increase perseverance, and are fun to practice at home too! Central School kindergartners will also participate in the Sounds In Motion (SIM) program,



a supplemental and interventional program designed to help bring therapeutic techniques into the classroom. Speech Language Specialist Allison Reu has been working collaboratively with the teachers to help foster early reading and writing skills by going into each classroom once a week. The SIM program not only pairs kinesthetic gross motor movements with individual phonemes, but it also targets improving listening, phonemic awareness, early literacy, vocabulary, and articulation skills.

Does "The Brain Game" pique your interest? Woodland students in grades K-2 will have an opportunity to use their brain power as they figure out word picture problems on a bulletin board entitled, "The Brain Game." Twice a month, students will be challenged to figure out a word from the picture clues. Created by Anita Brower, Susan Leonard, and Dorothy Stolfi, these word picture problems will allow students to relate pictures to their written word equivalent in the proper context of the clue. We are confident this will inspire students to have fun with problem solving!



Science students participate in many hands-on labs. Along with Science teacher Michelle Tanzi, 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes investigated and collected shadow data. They then analyzed the data to determine how the sun's apparent path impacts the length and angle of the shadows. Next up, they will be recreating the moon in its positions around the Earth to explain the amount of sunlight that strikes the moon at any given time in the cycle, as well as investigating the various phases that are seen throughout the month.



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Congratulations to Sheridan Ameo, Junior Open Water Scuba diver. She devoted much of her summer to studying for a written test and to passing six open water practice dives. She became PADI Junior to a 40 foot maximum depth. She diving allows her to explore plant



a Central School 5<sup>th</sup> grader, who earned her certification. She devoted much of her test and to passing six open water practice Open Water Certified enabling her to Scuba has always had a love of the ocean and and animal life with a closer perspective.

*Shining Brighter Every Day...* Many Warren teachers have continued their studies, taking graduate classes towards advanced degrees! We celebrate the achievements of the following Warren Township Schools' staff: Andrew Ahimovic, Nancy Braunstein, Mary Pat Brown, Emily Cartolano-Gomez, Cynthia Cassidy, Michelle Cebula, Kathryn DiDia, Bruce Gant, Jessica Halpern, Deborah Hunt, Julie Jagiello, Amy Jensen, Philip Jones, Colleen Krumm, Michele Kurilla, Catherine Lazas, Susan Leonard, Kara Miletic, Catherine Murphy, Anabela Ordner, Shannon O'Shea, Nicole Panos, Wendy Piller, Jenn Ronkiewicz, Tiffany Serafin, Dorothy Stolfi, Michele Tanzi, Daniel Ticchio, Christina Ulloa, Joel Van Tine, and Jill Ziobro.



In the World of Art... In Donna Pellagrino's classes, ALT students got to know each other by drawing self-portraits. They included backgrounds to highlight a favorite place they like to go or an activity they enjoy doing. At Central School, 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are using lines and patterns with black marker, to create a landscape which shows depth. Once their drawings are complete, Becky Davenport will teach them to add color using markers with a water wash over the color. With their Art teacher Susan Sage, Mount Horeb School's 5<sup>th</sup> graders are learning about the artist Edward Munch, who is known for many works including "The Scream". With brightly colored oil pastels as their medium, students are creating a picture using swirling lines and deep perspective like the artist. The 3<sup>rd</sup> graders at Woodland School are taking a whole new perspective on pumpkins with Jenn Ronkiewicz, as they create jack o'lanterns using oil pastels, each from a different perspective.



After exploring the effects that a creative composition can have on a subject, these young artists are on the path to creating pumpkins in a whole new way! Learning how United States postage stamps are created, was a beginning art project in Meryl Lettore's 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes. Warren Middle School students explored the process of making stamps from conception to print. They examined the history of postage stamps as well as the changing trends. Each child selected a theme reflective of the American experience, be it a person, place, or event. Working with many different mediums and materials, they were able to choose to use photography, collage, painting, drawing or any combination of these techniques.



WTS staff members often branch out to help the Warren Township community. Central School's Lauren Nelson and Laura Lamson went to C.E.R.T. (Citizen Emergency Response Team) training. They have been C.E.R.T. members in Warren Township for many years, dedicated to helping the town in emergency situations. Along with members from all over Somerset County, they practiced various scenarios which included search, rescue and evacuation.



Tara Keller and Carol Keirstead teach the integrated Preschool program at Mt. Horeb School. Visit the following link to check out what our students have been up to since the school year began:

<http://www.warrentboe.org/schools/district/features/preschool/>



Amy Jensen was proud to share that the Virtual Youth Choir premiered at the opening ceremony of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. Representing 80 countries, 2292 singers participated, including Warren Middle School's Olivia Forte and Mira Macleod. Eric Whitacre conducted the Virtual Youth Choir and the National Youth Choir of Scotland in front of 40,000 people in legendary Celtic Park stadium, as well as for a huge global audience. All of these voices sang together to benefit UNICEF.



The Huga Tuga Pep Rally for Reading was a huge hit at Central School. The interactive live performance encouraged students to become lifelong readers. The presenter brought out amazing energy in the students as they were encouraged to use their imagination throughout the performance. Additionally, Central School will be kicking off a school wide reading program called "Read to Feed".

Each student will find sponsors to pledge money for each book or unit of time that they spend reading. While the goal of "Read to Feed" is meant to promote reading, it will also allow children to become more aware of global issues. There will be a "Turn it Off" campaign where students and their families will turn off or reduce their electronic device usage on weekdays; students will receive a Turn It Off bracelet so they can take out an additional library book weekly. We thank the Central School homeroom teachers, as well as Lindsay Chell and Trish Morris, for their efforts related to these upcoming initiatives.



All schools celebrate a "Week of Respect" as part of our curriculum to promote good character and a positive school environment. Students focus on the meaning of respect and how they can demonstrate respect towards their families, peers, and community. Each elementary school will be involved in classroom lessons focusing on what students can do to prevent bullying, and how the anti-bullying rules can help. At the middle school level, students will be involved in a large group activity and participate in various themed days focusing on respecting differences. Also in October, in recognition of School Violence Awareness Week and National Red Ribbon Week, all Warren Township schools will be celebrating "A Week of Making Good Choices." In line with our district-wide Character Education curriculum, students are encouraged to positively handle conflicts and solve problems. The goal is to continue to encourage a positive school climate. We thank all of the following Guidance Counselors for their organization and efforts: Kelly Blessing-Maire, Midge Johnson, Diane Langworthy, Trish Morris, Lauren Regal, Helen Scully, and Kelly Stankiewicz.



Calling all essay writers! A writing contest is offered each year by the Watchung Hills Elks #2252. The theme for the 2014-2015 school year is, "What the Pledge of Allegiance Means To Me". Students in grades 5-8 are welcome to submit typed entries of 250 words or less, by November 24, 2014. If interested, entry forms and detailed directions are available at all five schools.



Fourth graders at Woodland School have been discovering Newton's 3 Laws of Motion and the principles of basic physics. They already met one challenge by designing vehicles to carry a specific load. This month they will examine simple machines, air-resistance and the effects of friction. Students are discovering that our science and engineering practices are in full force thanks to Brian Kilroy, Colleen Krumm, Jamie Perry, Margee Pfeifer, and Tiffany Serafin.



Interest Clusters began this fall for the 4<sup>th</sup> graders at Mount Horeb School. These clusters provide opportunities for student-centered activities where children can apply 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills to develop rich and meaningful projects. After conducting interest surveys, options were available in the following areas: logic, art, music through technology, creative writing, cultural awareness, and web-design. In January there will be an Expo, where students will discuss their intended goals, research, plans, and product. Their reflection of the process will be just as insightful as the journey itself!



At Warren Middle School there was a lot of enthusiasm about the Character Education kick-off activities and this year's theme... **Be Kind**. Students participated in a human scavenger hunt to strengthen their peer relationships and to get to know their teachers. They creatively designed signs that will be showcased on the WMS News as well as throughout the middle school. Students were



divided into groups to define the meaning of strong character. To conclude the session, students were asked to provide concrete ways in which they could be kind in middle school and then shared their group responses with the other students. The teachers are excited to continue this momentum into their next Character Education session.

During the 2013-2014 school year, the district had increased communications significantly and is excited to continue doing so throughout the current school year. Two Communications Survey opportunities were offered to parents and the suggestions received were greatly appreciated. Based upon parent feedback, school online calendars are updated frequently and teacher pages now have an icon linking to Warren Township Schools' News. There, one can read every article sent to the media via press release. Survey respondents expressed that the Warren Patch, TAPintoWarren and the Warren Monthly are read by many families. The district is also published in the Echoes-Sentinel, the Courier News, and the Sunday Star Ledger. Our district Facebook page has increased by over 200 followers. Captioned photos of staff and students provide information of events and accomplishments at all five schools, on a daily basis. Special thanks to those who provided feedback and we welcome anyone to email suggestions about communications to [share@warrentboe.org](mailto:share@warrentboe.org) or call 908-753-5300 (opt 1/ext 5711).

All PTOs have been planning some terrific events, with the focus on activities geared towards family fun! Please visit your school's calendar to watch for the event details, or follow our Warren Township Board of Education Facebook page.

Warren Township Schools is pleased to offer over 50 after-school clubs, throughout the district, taught by certificated staff. Each Club Advisor carefully sets specific goals and objectives when planning his/her enrichment lessons. To extend learning purposefully, the clubs are categorized in the following areas: Performing Arts, Curriculum Extensions, Logic/Problem Solving, Health/Physical Education, and Academic Support. Updates will be shared on social media and our district website about clubs such as Hands-on Science, Stop Motion Animation, Chess, Lego Robotics, as well as various clubs involving sports, community service, and more!



“As always, I continue to be impressed by the work that is done in our learning community. I am very proud of our students and staff!” ~ Dr. Tami Crader, Superintendent

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### Staff Spotlights...

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

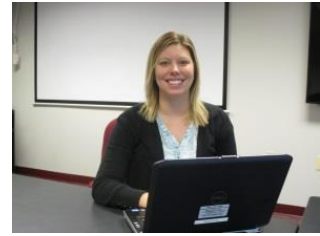
Patricia Leonhardt (right) is Warren Township Schools' Business Administrator, and her part-time Administrative Assistant is Sally DeFelice (left). Mrs. Leonhardt manages the district's fiscal affairs, making sure that financial resources are being allocated appropriately. She serves as Board Secretary and is a member on both the Safety and Security Committee and Leadership Council. Joining the staff in September 2013, Sally DeFelice assists with Business Office correspondence, the Board Agenda, and the Board Minutes. She handles facility usage as well as zoning and residency issues.



Liz Monaghan has been part of the Angelo L. Tomaso School community for 7 years. She maintains the front office and helps Principal Bond, as well as assists parents and staff by answering questions and providing information about school events. Her positive attitude adds to the welcoming atmosphere at ALT School!



Ashley Peterson joined Warren Township Schools as Data Manager in February of 2014. She works with the district's Technology Supervisor, Mary Ellen Roberts, to manage the student information system, and other databases for State reporting. Ms. Peterson assists with the coordination of applications such as SNAP and SchoolMessenger. She is also a resource for parents who need assistance with the Parent Portal.



Jane Auriemma and Carmella Motyzcka are a dynamic duo in Central School's main office. They meet and greet parents and visitors with their own unique style and positive energy. They are often called upon for advice on district policies and procedures. Fielding phone calls, compiling attendance reports, and handling dismissal notes are part of their duties, but they both put children first and are eager to help every child who has forgotten a lunch, or needs a kind smile.

Janet Kozik (right) and Annette Glorius (left) support the Special Services Department and new Director of Special Services, Mrs. Candie Hengemuhle. Both Mrs. Kozik and Ms. Glorius view students and parents as their primary focus. They answer questions and help parents connect with appropriate staff and resources. Working in tandem, they purchase materials, disseminate information, prepare data for State and Federal reports, and maintain important records. Additionally, they assist in monitoring the Special Services' budget, write motions for the Board agenda, and arrange home instruction as situations arise.

