

# Westside Wire



## WAVE Raises \$50,000 for Westside Schools at Western Gala

More than 200 supporters of the West Antelope Valley Education Foundation, also known as WAVE, raised more than \$50,000 last week to support Westside Union School District schools. Supporters gathered at the Rancho Vista Golf Club on Thursday to celebrate "Westside Heroes," community leaders who have supported the District throughout the years.

The "Westside Heroes" honored on Thursday night, and the area of service they were honored for, are: Steven Derryberry, Community Service; Marguerite Johnson, Education; former Rep. Steve and Lily Knight, Public Service; Hernando and Fran Marroquin, Business and Entrepreneurship; David Newby, Education Arts and Entertainment; Paula Sour (Posthumous), Community Service; Rodney Taylor, Community Service; and Lori and Shailene Woodley, nonprofit partner.

The Foundation raised more money via a live and silent auction in addition to the dinner sponsorships.

"We are honored to have the support of our WAVE Foundation supporters, and the event to honor these Westside heroes was better than we could have imagined," Westside Superintendent Regina Rossall, Westside said. "The money raised will help to support special programs throughout all our Westside schools."

Fall  
**2019**

Serving approximately 9,500 students spread across 346 square miles, Westside Union School District prides itself on being "the district of choice" with more choice-based programs than any other district in the Antelope Valley. Westside Union School District features 12 schools, providing world-class education to students from kindergarten to 8th grade.

## IDEA Academy 5th Graders Graduate from STARBASE

On October 23rd, 5th graders from the IDEA Academy @Cottonwood graduated from the Department of Defense's STARBASE program, a STEM based program that took place at Edwards Air Force Base at the beginning of this year. All graduating students had to complete 25 hours of STEM coursework.

DoD STARBASE focuses on elementary students, primarily fifth graders. The goal is to motivate them to explore Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) as they continue their education. The academies serve students that are historically under-represented in STEM. Students who live in inner cities or rural locations, those who are socio-economically disadvantaged, low in academic performance or have a disability are in the target group. The program encourages students to set goals and achieve them.

Along with the STARBASE instructors and staff, Dr. Smith, Mr. Otis, and Mr. Gaddis were the base leadership in attendance. Dr. Smith will give a speech address to students and parents. Dr. Smith is the civilian equivalent rank to the General, Mr. Otis is the director of XP Plans and Programs, and Mr. Gaddis is the Deputy director for XP Plans and programs.



## Board of Trustees

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## Get Social!

Get social with Westside! Find, friend, follow and like us to stay up to date on the great things going on!

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## Interview with Joe Walker Middle School Principal Steve Wood

Steve Wood has been a principal at Joe Walker for six years, and nine years at the school in total. He sat down with Westside Wire for an interview.

### **Q: How did you get started in education?**

I started education in San Diego. I was living in San Diego and taught in San Diego Unified School District. I taught there for five years. I was born and raised in the Antelope Valley though.

I taught middle school and elementary school there, and my wife and I thought it would be good to come home...to the Antelope Valley.

I spent the rest of my time here. This is my 18<sup>th</sup> year teaching.



### **Q: Did you always know you wanted to be an educator?**

Yeah. I grew up in a family of educators. My mom was an educator, my grandfather was a teacher at AV High School...it was kind of a family business. When I was in college, I thought, do I want to be in teaching? I do like kids a lot, and the schedule is kind of cool.

That was just growing up, my mom had us help put up bulletin boards and stuff like that...and so it just came natural.

### **Q: What is your approach to education?**

The thing I value the most is trying to expose students to all the options they have at their fingertips, all the things that are out there for them. One of the quotes that I always live by is "if you aim at nothing, you will hit it". The reason I like that theme is that I value giving the students the opportunity to be exposed to lots of different things, so that they can figure out what they want to do before they leave Joe Walker. If they are exposed to robotics, or the arts, or humanities...because students who feel that they belong in school do far better academically, go onto to be successful human beings and contributing members of society. So we pride ourselves at Joe Walker at giving students as many opportunities as possible.

### **Q: What is your favorite part about being principal?**

The relationships. I really value being able to build relationships with families, and students, and the teachers...all the staff members on campus. I really feel that the strength in the power of our program literally has nothing to do with me; it's with the individuals, it's with the students who are involved, the parents who are supporting them. So I just do the best I can to support them, give them everything they need to be successful, and stay out of their way.

### **Q: Is there a fun fact about you that most people wouldn't know?**

I love Star Wars.

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## A Message From The Superintendent

A Time to Give Thanks,

As I consider the tragic events of the past weeks, the devastating wildfires, school shootings, threats of school shootings, and other violent acts, we mourn the victims and send our sympathy to their families who are dealing with immeasurable grief. Our thoughts and prayers continue to flow to those most impacted by these tragic events. At the same time, we must give thanks to the fire fighters, deputies, teachers, school staff and many others who heroically did their jobs to save both lives and property.

At a recent meeting of the Board of Trustees, one of our teachers was recognized for her heroic act in saving the life of one of her students who was choking. Her swift attention to the child and being prepared to act prevented a more serious situation from occurring. As the student said, "my teacher is my hero."

Thank you Ms. Autumn Arlington-Hendrickson, who teaches at the IDEA Academy at Cottonwood, for her actions

On any school day of the year, when called upon, our staff members throughout the District would do whatever it takes to save the life of one of our students or a fellow staff member. Going beyond the regular functions of their job, each of our staff is prepared to keep our schools as safe as possible and to protect the lives of those who are in our schools every day. I am very proud of the staff members in our district and ever so thankful for their service to our community. They make a difference every day and when called upon step up to do whatever is necessary to protect and help our children.

Recently the analogy of "it takes a village" to raise a child was utilized in a presentation to the Board. That so represents the staff members and parents of our district. Everyone does their best to help support our students in achieving both their academic, physical, social and emotional goals at school. I am thankful to all of you who provide support to our students in their quest to meet the standards expected of them in our classrooms, to learn to be kind to those around them, to give to others in their community that may be in need, and to be well-round individuals in all they do.

As always, I am thankful to our community for supporting our students, staff and schools. Our partnership is what helps all of our students meet their potential. I am hopeful that all of you will enjoy the Thanksgiving break with an opportunity to spend time with family, friends, and just enjoying some time together reconnecting and giving thanks for all that we have. Remember, school resumes on Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Regina Rossall  
Superintendent

# Westside Round Up: A message from your principals

## IDEA Academy @Cottonwood

The Innovators at the IDEA Academy had a fantastic first quarter. The Cottonwood Children's Choir kicked off their second season with an exciting performance at the WAVE- AVC tailgate party on the Antelope Valley College Campus. Through a partnership with the STARBASE program at Edwards Air Force Base, all of our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students went to school on the base once a week for five weeks to be immersed in hands-on, project based learning in science and engineering. 5<sup>th</sup> grade celebrated successfully completing their mission with a graduation ceremony at school, attended by STARBASE leadership and keynote speaker, Dr. David Smith. Late October brought the International Fall Festival and family night. Innovator families came out to enjoy class games, raffle baskets, a pumpkin decorating contest, delicious concessions, and cultural displays in the cafeteria created by our Cultural Literacy Club parents and each grade level. We ended the month with Red Ribbon week with daily spirit days focused on celebrating the benefits of staying positive and drug free. Go, Innovators!

## Esperanza

All students and staff have settled into the 2019/2020 school year and we are excited to see how our students will learn and grow throughout the school year. Our PTA has been extremely busy with hosting a Family Dance night event, book fair, and running our Fall Fundraiser. PTA and the EZ staff members worked together to get ready for our upcoming Fall Carnival which was a fun event for all. Our students have had the opportunity to meet the head coach from the Antelope Valley College football team and play playground games at lunchtime with some of the football players who visited our site. We are excited for our students to visit Antelope Valley College as a part of the Junior Touchdown Club. This is a great opportunity for students to become familiar with our local college!

## Hillview

The Hillview Hawks are off to a flying start! Students have been hard at work in the classroom and on the court. Students have settled in to their classes and are enjoying the variety of electives that we are offering this year. Our cheerleaders got off to an early start and are practicing to cheer on our sports teams and fight back for their national title in the spring. Hillview's numerous clubs and sports programs are getting underway with the Volleyball and Cross Country teams gearing up for another award-winning season. PTSA is active in recruiting new members and hosting the Graveyard Gala in October. Our tutoring program, including our learning lab, are also available to help students every day! Finally, students and staff are continuing to show their school spirit with our spirit wear campaign. Dare to Soar Hawks! Your attitude almost always affects your altitude in life. Go Hawks!!

## Anaverde Hills

Anaverde Hills has been hard at work this first quarter. Our school year got off to a great start as we welcomed back our students along with 6 teachers new to Anaverde Hills! Students have been working on increasing their reading fluency and reading comprehension skills through targeted intervention and extension this school year. Ms. Barefield has been working to provide social-emotional learning lesson to all our students to support their social and academic development. Our 8th graders participated in the PSAT and 3 of our volleyball teams made it to the playoffs! We are proud of the hard work being done by our teachers and students everyday in the classroom. In addition, our PTSA has been working diligently to support our school with a variety of activities. In October we held our very successful Viper Run and raised over \$10,000. We are looking forward to our upcoming holiday shows, recognizing our Westside Scholars, and continuing to learn and grow academically and socially!

## Del Sur

Del Sur Dragons have started the 2019-20 school year by celebrating all the things that we have in common in all our family groups. Students know they are part of the Del Sur Family. Additionally, on Friday September 6<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated Grandparents Day in our Kindergarten yard. Grandparents and or those representing them were able to enjoy a picnic lunch with their student and the kindergarten teachers. On October 25th we had our fall festival, which was an opportunity for all family members to join us for an evening of fun. Go Dragons! 

## Gregg Anderson Academy

Gregg Anderson Academy students and staff have had a great beginning to the 2019-2020 school year! There are many exciting events planned for our students and families the week of September 23rd including our first School Site Council Meeting of the year on September 24th at 2:20 PM, a book fair sponsored by the PTA and a Family Technology Night/PTA meeting at 5:00 PM on September 25th. Teachers and staff are also geared up for parent teacher conferences on October 7th and 8th. Our site was busy preparing for our annual GAA Fall Festival which will be held on October 25th. Please save the date! Go Aviators!

## **Joe Walker**

Joe Walker Middle School STEALTH Academy has had a great start to the school year. We started out with a fantastic presentation by the Amazing Tei Street, a nationally recognized motivation speaker, who talked to the students about being all they can be and striving for their goals regardless of the obstacles in their way. We are very excited about two upcoming robotics tournaments. Our VEX Tournament is taking place on October 5 and the FIRST Lego League Tournament is on November 9. Both tournaments will take place in Joe Walker's gymnasium. If you are interested in robotics, this is a tournament you won't want to miss. Go Jets!!!

## **Quartz Hill**

In September and October at Quartz Hill Elementary, we are celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month. With the help of our CCA's, students colored flags and learned about famous Hispanic Americans. Our PTA is prepared for our Fall Fundraiser beginning the last week of September. PTA is also planned our Red Ribbon Week with a visit from law enforcement. We are also looking forward to Lunch on the Lawn. This year it will be paired with a Halloween celebration. Students are taking NWEA Maps tests in order to prepare for interventions that will take place at each grade level three days/week. Students will receive specific, targeted instruction in their areas of need. Finally, we welcomed Rakyah Harris to our staff. She is teaching a 5/6 combination class. We look forward to fall and meeting our parents during parent/teacher conferences.

## **Rancho Vista**

Rancho Vista is gearing up for a busy fall. Along with the district sponsored WAVE events, our PTA has scheduled "Beauties and Boots" a western themed girls' dance on September 27 for girls and an adult chaperone. Different grade levels are also planning information/ family nights in the month of October. 4<sup>th</sup> grade has a parent night and 6<sup>th</sup> grade has a STEM night on October 3. October 15 is 3<sup>rd</sup> grade's STEM night and October 17 is 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade's STEM night. Then to top off the month, we have our PTA Fall Carnival October 25 and Red Ribbon Week the last week of October. At Rancho Vista, this is a great time of year to partner with families to make good education a priority for our students.

## **Sundown**

Sundown has started the school year with the theme "Together We Are Better" which is symbolic of the puzzle pieces that each of us contribute to make the school a collaborative educational community to meet the needs of our students. We will be continuing to promote science, technology, engineering, art, and math through STEAM time on Mondays and Fridays as well as other times throughout the week with cross curricular connections. Our staff is diligently working on utilizing data to improve student learning outcomes as part of our collaborative process this year. We look forward to enhancing school programs through PTA support as an integral component of our school's puzzle in the Together We Are Better theme!

## **Valley View**

Valley View Elementary ended another successful academic year with our Annual School Family Picnic held on the last day of school. This tradition is a way for us to connect with our families to celebrate student learning and academic growth. On June 3, 2019, 6th graders participating in our annual send-off evening. We recognized the importance of the rite of passage leaving elementary and entering into Jr. High. Back to School Night will be held on August 6, 2019 from 4:30-6:30. We wish everyone a safe and relaxing summer.

## **Leona Valley**

Leona Valley school is off to a wonderful start! We are happy to welcome Mrs. Jones as our teaching vice principal and Ms. Smith in our 5/6 class. Our students have been hard at work focusing on gain the academic skills necessary to achieve the standards. In addition, our PTO held a very successful Fall Festival in October and raised over \$4000. Students participated in national walk to school day and took a walking field trip to the old Leona Valley School House. We capped off the first quarter with our annual Halloween parade! We are excited for the progress that we know our students will continue to make over the next quarter!

## **Westside Academy**

Westside Academy is off to a great start. Our 100% online curriculum is completely adaptable to meet the specific learning needs of our students. We are proud to host a program that is an alternative learning environment so that we are to reach and assist our students. Our program services students in grades 6, 7, and 8. Last year Westside Academy saw a 100% graduation rate from our 8th grade class. We would like to wish those students the best of luck in the future as we welcome our new students to our program.

# Westside Announcements

## WAVE Foundation



The start of the school year always kicks-off with many family fun activities from our West Antelope Valley Educational Foundation (WAVE). If you are not familiar with WAVE, it's the district's foundation that raises money to provide grants to all Westside schools. WAVE has helped fund the cost for students to compete and travel to competitions, attend field trips and purchase necessary school items, to name a few.

We would like to thank everyone that participated in our annual AVC Junior Touchdown Club Tailgate Party. Please keep an eye on the District's Facebook page for upcoming fundraisers.

## Emergency Card Updates

As we begin the new school year, please make sure your child's emergency card is up to date.

On occasion we have found numbers that have been disconnected or no longer in service. It's important that our staff may contact you during a time of need.

Stop by the front office or log on to PowerSchool to update your information today.

## Parents Get Involved

Become an active member of our Westside family. Research has shown that parent involvement helps your child succeed.

Contact your child's principal or stop by the front office to learn about becoming an active PTA/PTSA/PTO member.

You may also visit our website to learn how to become a parent volunteer. Type the following link and look under our Resources tab: [www.westside.k12.ca.us](http://www.westside.k12.ca.us)

## Westside App

Download the Westside Union School District mobile application for free. Get access to district news, schools directory, view upcoming events, lunch menus and more. Search for "Westside Union School District" in the App Store or Google Play.



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