

# WHITESBORO

## CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

INSPIRE | CULTIVATE | EMPOWER



# LET'S GO BIG BLUE!

Leading up to the NYSPHSAA Football Class A Championship Game, varsity football players visited their respective elementary school and walked the halls as students and staff cheered them on.

*Turn to page 3 to read more!*

FEBRUARY 2024

**NYS MASTER TEACHERS ANNOUNCED**  
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Page 11

**Dear Parents, Guardians and School Community Members:**

I hope this issue of our newsletter finds you well as we begin the second half of our school year. In this issue, you will see many examples of the accomplishments and successes of our students and staff. We look forward to all those we know will be coming in the remaining months of school!

It's now that time of year we find ourselves deeply engaged in the financial planning for next year. Our building and departmental administrators have worked with their respective staffs to develop next year's financial plans with the aim of providing the best opportunities possible for our students in the most cost effective manner possible.

The budget development process includes opportunities for community input at the Budget Development Workshop meetings of the Board of Education. We welcome your input and appreciate the opportunity to engage with you regarding this fundamental function of our District. Please check the website for the most current list of dates, times and locations.

Thank you for all you do to support our school community. Together, we focus our efforts and energy in pursuit of our mission, "To inspire, cultivate, and empower all learners to maximize their potential."

Sincerely,

**Dr. Brian K. Bellair**

*Superintendent of Schools*



## DISTRICT HOSTS LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

The Whitesboro Central School District hosted a Legislative Breakfast at Whitesboro High School on December 11 for elected officials and local superintendents to discuss important issues facing the region's school districts and goals for the coming year.

Senator Joseph Griffo, Assemblywoman Marianne Buttenschon, Assemblyman Brian Miller and Assemblyman Robert Smullen were in attendance, along with superintendents from the Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES and Madison-Oneida BOCES component school districts.

The superintendents advocated in favor of several initiatives that would positively impact their school districts and PK-12 education throughout the Mohawk Valley and Central New York regions. Whitesboro student artwork was on display and several student-musicians were selected to perform prior to breakfast. Attendees were led on a tour of several areas of the high school by High School Principal Mr. Jeff Kuhn, including the Pit, library and a science classroom featuring a scanning electron microscope. High School Science Department Chair Mr. Sean Ryan and science teacher Ms. Dana Wadnola provided a demonstration of the scanning electron microscope -- one of only four in high schools across the entire nation.

The Whitesboro Central School District thanks our local elected officials and regional superintendents for their time and attention to the critical legislative topics affecting education in New York State.





# Hart's Hill Elementary School

## AWARDED BADGE FOR RANKING AMONG BEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN NEW YORK STATE

Hart's Hill Elementary School has been awarded a badge by U.S. News and World Report for ranking in the top 40% of elementary schools in New York State. The U.S. News rankings include data on more than 37,000 public elementary schools nationwide.

Hart's Hill Elementary School is ranked 353rd among New York elementary schools with an overall rating of 80.09/100. Public elementary schools that earned U.S. News rankings in the top 40% in their state gained eligibility to display a U.S. News award badge.

For each state, schools were assessed on their pupils' proficiencies in mathematics and reading, as measured by state assessment tests. Half of the ranking formula was the results themselves; the other half was the results in the context of socioeconomic demographics. In other words, the top-ranked schools are high-achieving ones that succeeded in educating all of their students.

"The faculty and staff of Hart's Hill Elementary School consistently work cooperatively to meet the needs of our students," said Principal Lisa Putnam. "I am so proud of our accomplishments and this well-deserved recognition."



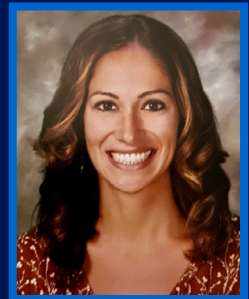
## NEW YORK STATE MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM

Congratulations to Mrs. Carla Ryan and Ms. Abbie Sutliff on being selected as New York State Master Teachers.

Carla Ryan, 6th grade teacher at Parkway Middle School, and Abbie Sutliff, 4th grade teacher at Marcy Elementary, were selected for the New York State Master Teacher Program, a statewide professional network of more than 1,700 K-12 STEM educators with a passion for inspiring the next generation of educational leaders. Master Teachers are committed to sharing best practices and creating engaging and inspiring learning environments for their students. Their selections bring the enrollment of Whitesboro educators in this prestigious program, both current and emeritus, to 20 total members. Congratulations to Mrs. Ryan and Ms. Sutliff on this great accomplishment!



MRS. RYAN



MS. SUTLIFF

## VARSITY FOOTBALL PLAYERS VISIT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS *Continued from cover*

On December 2, a free viewing of the Championship game was held at the high school, allowing students and the community to show their school pride and cheer on the team together. The Whitesboro football team was ultimately defeated by Somers Central School District. Congratulations to the team on a great season!



FORENSICS CLASSES SERVED

# MURDER MYSTERY

CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS  
DO NOT CROSS

OOPS, I THINK THEY DID IT AGAIN!

Once again, crime has come to Whitesboro High School – well, sort of. On December 15, Mr. Bertrand's forensics science classes were once again served with a murder mystery "whodunit" to solve. This time, a male victim had fallen to the cursed "back hall killer."

"From this point forward," explains Mr. Bertrand, "the activities in the classroom will focus on the collection, analysis and understanding of the significance of each piece of evidence that may or may not point to the perpetrator. There are over 40 different pieces of evidence – from foot prints, hand prints, hidden prints and blood spatter that all tell a story and can point to any one of the several suspects that have emerged. Several different staff members were heard or seen yelling or having an argument with the deceased, so the students have work to do to narrow the suspect pool down."

"All students in this class will become basic crime scene investigators," Mr. Bertrand continues, "and some of them will perform specialty roles such as fingerprint specialist or criminalist, which require a high level of background information, complex analysis and problem solving."



There will also be a class assistant district attorney who will serve search warrants to staff for evidence such as foot prints, shoes or fingerprints. This activity is a race to find a solution before the year runs out, and it's a great experiential game that immerses students in a daily solvable crime instead of a 40-minute TV show.

Next year, Mr. Bertrand will be teaching the chemistry based Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA) forensic science class, which will offer high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to earn four college credits in chemistry, or toward a science, while still at Whitesboro High School.

"This is a great opportunity for students to satisfy a chemistry or other science credit, one of which is required for college, while here at Whitesboro High School and for a fraction of what it would cost at any college," said Mr. Bertrand.

Now the question still remains- can the students solve that crime? Game on!

## SENIORS COMPLETE ONEIDA COUNTY GOVERNMENT INTERN PROGRAM

Three Whitesboro High School seniors completed the Cornell Cooperative Extension's Oneida County Government Intern Program this fall. Seniors Jada Del Rio, Eanna Durso and Dominic Marrero participated in this program along with students from Proctor and VVS High Schools. They are currently enrolled in Mr. Coriale's Mohawk Valley Community College dual credit American National Government (PS 101) course.

Students experienced first-hand how local government works through their participation in legislative meetings, listening to guest speakers and collaborating on a group project which provided additional insight into the legislative process. Students worked with members of the Oneida County Legislature and department heads in Oneida County government throughout the program. This allowed students to become engaged citizens with a better understanding of the issues and concerns that arise in their own community.

The program concluded with a mock county legislative session as students researched a local issue, worked with their county legislator, wrote a resolution and debated it on the floor of the chambers of the Oneida County Legislature.

Congratulations Jada, Eanna and Dominic!







# National French Week

Whitesboro High School celebrated National French Week from November 1-8. Each day started with a trivia question about the French language and/or the Francophone culture, followed by music from a Francophone artist. These artists included Edith Piaf (La Vie en Rose), Carla Lazzari (Bim Bam Toi) and Zaz (Je Veux). Trivia winners were chosen each day, and they each received a prize bag which included a gift card, some treats and French themed items.

Students were also given the opportunity to enter a poster contest centered around the national theme: "All Around Me: La Francophonie!" (the French-speakers). Students picked a name of a French-speaking country and included various facts about that country on their poster. Winners included Syke Buffa (French 2), Kadence Heinlein (French 3) and Sophia Garcia (French 191). Très bon travail et félicitations à tous (Very good work and congratulations to everyone)!

On the final day of National French Week, all faculty, staff and French students were encouraged to wear blue, white and red; the colors of the French flag. During the week, French students of all levels were invited to a cheese tasting event where they had some fun wearing berets and taking photos at a French-themed selfie station. There were five cheeses available to discover: Brie, Mimolette, Pet't Basque, Chèvre and Boursin. The cheeses were enjoyed with French baguettes and small pieces of toast along with red and white sparkling grape juice. Students and staff reveled in the café atmosphere, with the sounds of café music in the background and the smell of baguettes in the air.

To cap off French week, students from all levels traveled to the Schenectady Armory to enjoy an immersion experience with the paintings of Monet. Students learned about Monet's life and his painting style, Impressionism, through his series paintings. Students were fully engrossed in his paintings in the 360-degree full-immersion room and through their virtual reality tour. At the end of their visit, they were able to recreate one of Monet's paintings by coloring in one of his masterpieces. Before heading back to Whitesboro, a local café welcomed students. They dined on crêpes (dessert and lunch varieties), specialty sandwiches, herbal teas and more; much like a French café. It was a wonderful way to wrap up this year's National French Week celebration!



## NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTS NEW MEMBERS

On November 7, both inductees and current members of the National Honor Society (NHS) attended an induction ceremony at Hart's Hill Inn.

Students and their families enjoyed a buffet dinner followed by the lighting of candles by current officers and the presentation of pins to all new inductees.

Congratulations to our students on this great accomplishment!



GREATER UTICA  
HONORS CONCERT BAND



On January 20, 43 students from the Whitesboro High School and Middle School bands took part in the Greater Utica Honors Concert Band. The Honors bands, now in their 19th year, provide a great opportunity for band students from area middle and high schools to rehearse and perform together. The bands are co-directed by Dr. Bradley Ethington, director of bands and professor of music at Syracuse University, and Mrs. Kristyn Cutler, director of bands at Westmoreland Middle and High Schools. Each band consisted of students from around the region, culminating in a concert for parents, friends and community members at Westmoreland High School. Congratulations to all of the students involved!

NEW YORK STATE *Mentoring* ON THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS



The NYS Mentoring Program at Whitesboro has upper level students from the high school meet one-to-one with students at the middle school campus. Mentoring sessions occur once per week from October through April. Mentors serve as a source of friendship and support for younger students as they navigate through these formative years. During mentoring, mentors provide direction, advice, guidance and encouragement to a younger peer.

In January, the mentors, mentees and staff facilitating the program had a celebration to mark the halfway point of this experience. Students in the program had the opportunity to share food and participate in games such as cornhole, ping-pong, foosball and Kan Jam.

In April, participating students will have the opportunity at a culminating experience in which formal certificates from New York State are awarded to the mentors. Mentees will also get the chance to express what mentoring has meant to them as the experience comes to an end.

We thank the student mentors that have given the gift of their time as well as shared their knowledge and experiences to help their younger peers grow and develop.



NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY  
AND STUDENT COUNCIL  
**RAISE MONEY**  
FOR LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

In December, the National Junior Honor Society and Middle School Campus Student Council teamed up to hold a fundraiser for the local volunteer fire departments. Students in grades six, seven and eight donated baked goods to sell during lunch periods. In total, over \$1,100 was raised and donated to our District's fire departments. We are happy to support the brave duty of our local firefighters!



SEVENTH GRADE MATH

**GLOW** DAY

On December 21, seventh grade students at Whitesboro Middle School participated in Math Glow Day. During each of the Math 7 classes, students rotated around four stations: Operations with Integers, Tic-Tac-Toe Angles, Math Jenga and Order of Operations Puzzle.

At the Operations with Integers station, students answered a variety of integers-related questions. When their answers were checked, they found their answers on a coloring sheet and the picture ended up being a snowflake.

At the Tic-Tac-Toe Angles station, students were separated into two teams to answer questions about angles. If the card had a vocabulary word, students modeled the word with glow sticks. If it had an algebra question, students tried to answer the question. If the team that picked the task card got the question correct, they were able to make a play on the tic-tac-toe board.

At the Math Jenga station, there were six types of questions students could choose from to answer, and the questions were color coded. If the students answered the question correctly, they tried to remove a Jenga piece matching the color and then put the piece back on top of the stack.

At the Order of Operations Puzzle station, students answered questions and put puzzle pieces together.

Each of the activities took place with the lights off, black lights on and lots of glow-in-the-dark pieces. Students used yellow highlighters to complete their math work and they were each given a glow stick. It was a fun way to make math enjoyable and help students learn at the same time.





## Celebrating the Holidays at Deerfield Elementary



Deerfield Elementary School had a lot of fun celebrating the holidays together with our Deerfield Countdown to Winter Recess! The Deerfield staff and students decked the halls and dressed for the occasion for 12 days in a row. Our fun dress-up days included Get Fancy, Green Like the Grinch, Santa Day, Rudolph Day, Pajama Day and a whole lot more!

### FORMER HART'S HILL STUDENT

## Gives Back to Elementary School

Meg (Barry) George, author of "What's Philanthropy to Philomena?" visited Hart's Hill on December 20 to talk to students about the process of writing a book and explain philanthropy to our students.

George is a former Hart's Hill student and graduate of the Whitesboro CSD. After the presentation, students realized that they are well on their way to becoming philanthropists!



## HOLIDAY FUN

AT WEST. RD.

Westmoreland Road Elementary School hosted their annual sing-along event on December 21. All students in grades kindergarten through five enjoyed a variety of holiday favorites and a special performance by the teachers at the end of the show.

Also on December 21, three orchestra students (Addelyn Olah, Julianna Busch and Renny Schleicher) joined Mrs. Tallman in the hallway during the Morning Wake Up Walking Program to play some holiday classics.



# SENIOR HOCKEY PLAYERS DELIVER GIFTS TO HART'S HILL STUDENTS

On December 13, the senior players on the Whitesboro varsity hockey team delivered gifts to students at Hart's Hill Elementary School and read them holiday stories. Their tradition of visiting an elementary school classroom is one they look forward to each year.

Each student in the elementary classroom was given a gift and the hockey players read books such as "The Night Before Christmas," "Biscuit Gives a Gift" and "Frosty the Snowman." After reading stories, the hockey players and elementary students played with the younger students' new gifts.

The hockey team always enjoys seeing the students' excitement and the team looks forward to continuing this tradition in the years to come.



Marcy Elementary School participated in a Glow Walk after raising \$12,000 for field trips and other events and activities sponsored by the Marcy PTO.



To prepare for the event, students made glow art in art class and got their best glowing attire ready! Students had a blast walking and running laps with glow balloons, glow sticks and black lights surrounding them.

In addition to the Glow Walk, students were able to "slime" Principal Rothdiener if they reached their \$6,000 goal. Since students doubled their goal, they were also able to slime several teacher volunteers, including Mr. McGowan, Mrs. Linck, Mrs. Nassif, Mrs. Guaraciso and even Board of Education Member Dr. Henderson!

This outstanding achievement would not have been possible without the support of our amazing students, families and faculty. Thank you for your overwhelming support for our PTO!

# What I Love

## About My School

Fourth grade students at Westmoreland Road Elementary School recently wrote essays describing what they love about their school.



MARCY ELEMENTARY  
**PARP**  
KICK-OFF

On January 10, Marcy Elementary School held its Pick a Reading Partner (PARP) kick-off assemblies with local author Alicia Klepeis as a special guest. Klepeis is from Hamilton, New York and she is the author of about 200 children's books, which are mostly nonfiction.


The PARP program ran from January 10-26 and this year's theme was Reading Colors Our World. The goal of the PARP program is for students to spend 15-20 minutes reading with a partner (parent, guardian, babysitter, sibling, cousin, friend, etc.) each day.

Many of Klepeis' books are about animals and countries, and she explained to students that the books are based on her travels around the world.

"There are lots of ways to get great ideas for books," Klepeis told students. She also explained that writers draw inspiration from personal interests, life experiences and their own imaginations, and she encouraged students to look around and discover the world around them.

Klepeis told students that good writers read a lot, keep a journal and have a natural curiosity about the world around them. She reminded students that writing a book is a process and they must be patient, as a book is never completed on the first try.

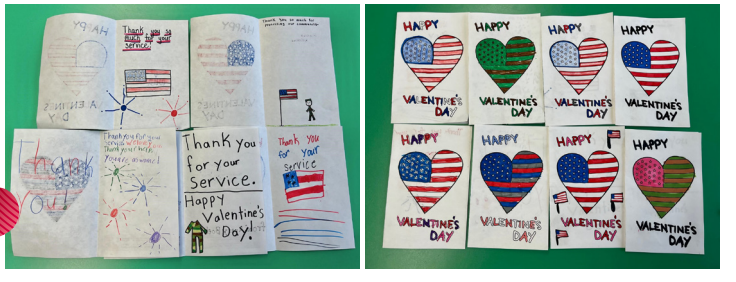
The grades K-2 and 3-5 assemblies each ended with a question and answer session between Klepeis and Marcy students. Her visit was hosted by the Marcy PTO and the PARP Committee, with the goal of fostering a love of reading books in Marcy students.



VALENTINES FOR VETERANS

This year, as she's done in years past, Assemblywoman Marianne Buttenschon reached out to local schools for her Valentines for Veterans campaign. Students were asked to write messages and design cards, which will be distributed to local veterans' organizations and facilities throughout the area this Valentine's Day.

Students in Mrs. Russo's fourth grade class at Deerfield Elementary School heeded the call, and couldn't have been more excited to create cards for these heroes! They wrote messages thanking them for their service, for protecting our country and showing their overall appreciation for these veterans and their dedication. Our fourth graders hope their cards and heartfelt messages of support will put smiles on the faces of our local veterans this Valentine's Day!



Thank you for your service. Happy Valentine's Day!

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY



NATIONAL LETTER OF INTENT  
**SIGNING DAY**

The Whitesboro Athletic Department held a National Letter of Intent (NLI) Signing Day on November 8 in the high school library to congratulate and recognize four student-athletes who will be committing to Division I or Division II programs. Congratulations and best wishes for success in your future athletic endeavors!



*The following athletes were recognized during the NLI Signing Day:*

**REINA LOIACANO**  
 Womens Swimming  
 Southern Connecticut State University

**BRINLEY RONAN**  
 Womens Lacrosse  
 Davenport University

**HANNAH SMITH**  
 Womens Soccer  
 St. Bonaventure University

**CHRISTOPHER STILWELL**  
 Mens Golf  
 Assumption University

**MEIER COMMITS TO DARTMOUTH UNIVERSITY**

On December 20, Whitesboro senior quarterback and captain Kyle Meier officially committed to continue his education and football career at Ivy League Dartmouth University next fall.



Meier, one of the top football players in the Mohawk Valley and all of Section III, visited Dartmouth in spring 2023, received an offer from the University in early August and made his official visit at the beginning of the high school football season in September.

Meier completed his senior season at Whitesboro with more than 2,300 yards rushing and threw for another 1,859. He finished with 59 total touchdowns and was named as a finalist for the 2023 All-Central New York Large School Football Player of the Year.

Congratulations, Kyle and best of luck at Dartmouth and beyond!



Individual Varsity Cross Country participant Catherine Manna, along with team members Seth Stevens, Joseph LaBarbera, Leo Wengert, Evan DeStefanis, Schuyler Riley-Jones, Ethan LaMore, Ethan Kidwell, Calvin Cooley, Luke Benjamin, and Avery Heretz advanced to the State Championships on November 11 at VVS High School. The teams were coached by Brian Holtslag and Kelly Lenard. Congratulations to all of our cross country team members who made it and competed in the State Championships.



Congratulations to the girls swimming team which had four members of the team qualify for the state championship meet. The 200 meter freestyle relay team of Sienna Martin, Reina Loiacano, Sophie Spina and Alexa Loiacano earned first place with a time of 1:42.85. Sienna Martin was the winner of the 500 meter freestyle with a time of 5:21.65.



On October 28, the Whitesboro varsity cheerleading team took first place at the Section III Championships held at General Brown High School. Captain Ella Lorraine was presented with a Section III Scholarship. Teammates Jessica Madison and Karena Piayai were named Section III All-Stars.

# WHITESBORO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

INSPIRE | CULTIVATE | EMPOWER

65 Oriskany Boulevard, Whitesboro, New York 13492

## SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Brian K. Bellair

## BOARD OF EDUCATION, 2023-2024

Mr. Michael Head, *President*

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## Postal Patron Local

The Whitesboro Central School District Board of Education meets at 7:00 p.m., unless noted otherwise. Meetings are held at the Administration Building at 65 Oriskany Blvd. in Whitesboro, or at one of the school buildings in the District. Visit [www.wboro.org/boemeeting](http://www.wboro.org/boemeeting) for the complete meeting schedule.

Non-Profit Organization  
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Permit No. 18

WHITESBORO HIGH SCHOOL  
MUSIC DEPARTMENT PRESENTS:

# SCHOOL *of* ROCK THE MUSICAL

Thursday, February 29 ..... 7 p.m.  
Friday, March 1 ..... 7 p.m.  
Saturday, March 2 ..... 2 p.m.

High School Auditorium

## High School Student Council Donates to National Organization

Prior to Winter Recess, the Whitesboro High School Student Council held a winter Spirit Week and sponsored Pajama Day on December 22. In conjunction with Pajama Day, the Student Council held a fundraiser for Sleep in Heavenly Peace, a national organization with a local chapter whose mission is to provide beds for children in the area who otherwise wouldn't have one.

Students collected bedding, blankets, pillows, comforters and bed sheets, along with monetary donations totaling \$740. The donations will help the organization to further their mission of making sure that "no child sleeps on the floor."

