

# MUSTANG JOURNAL

MEDINA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER



Higher Standards ... Higher Education

Winter 2021

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## Vision Statement

Exemplify excellence in education.

## Mission Statement

Educate to inspire all to reach beyond the expected and positively impact their communities.



## A Message from your Superintendent

It seems like it was just yesterday that we welcomed all of our students back to school - both in person and virtually. It is tough to believe that we have passed the halfway point of the school year. While much of the focus this year has been on adapting to the usage of technology, I would like to take time in this column to talk about the importance of reading at home.

There has been plenty of research completed on how students learn. Children are far more interested in learning from their parents, and in receiving their parents approval than any other person in their childhood. The parent is the child's first and most important teacher.

Above all else, the most important thing a parent can do is read to their children. This will help a child in the development of language skills, and will help them understand the world around them. Additionally, reading helps children develop an interest in learning.

As students progress throughout their educational careers, teachers are very aware that high achieving students are often the same students whose parents have been involved in their growth and development at school. Parents play a critical role in the development of personal responsibility, which is so important in success at school. It is important that parents work together with teachers to support their child's education. Please maintain the lines of communication with your child's teachers, so that we can all work together to help your child be successful in school, and in life.

Thank you for being your child's most important teacher, and for supporting our schools.

Mark B. Kruzynski  
Superintendent



Mr. Mark Kruzynski  
Superintendent

## Veterans Recognized By Medina High School Students

Despite the pandemic, Medina High School students still wanted to thank area veterans with their traditional dinner celebration. This year, the National Honor Society, with teacher advisor, Alissa Dunham, decided to have a drive-thru dinner. "We have a really great group of students this year, who were willing to run the dinners out to veterans in their cars," says Ms. Dunham. "We served about 65 people, where we normally serve 100, but we were just grateful we were able to honor them like we do every year."





## Angel Tree Makes Holiday Season Joyous for All

Every year, staff at Clifford Wise Intermediate/Middle School donates gifts for their Angel Tree that benefits several families with children in the Medina School District.

School Counselor Lindsay Fassel says thanks to the generosity of the school community, just shy of 90 families across the district were supported this holiday season. "Thanks to not only our district, but local churches, fire departments and sponsors, the holidays turned out a lot nicer for those who participated."

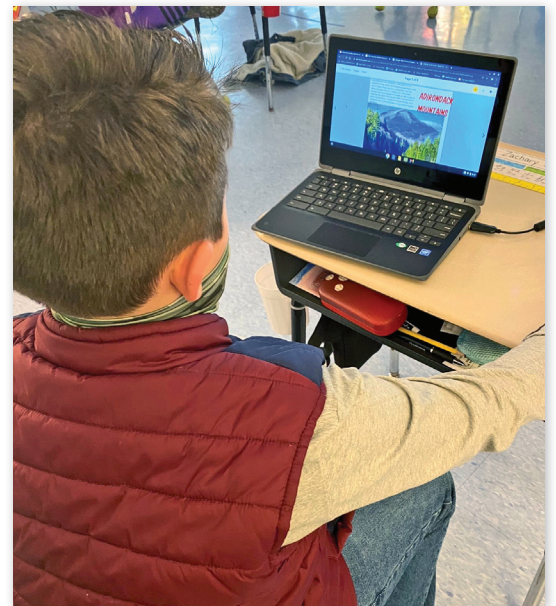


School Counselor Lindsay Fassel.

## Fourth Grade Projects Helps Students Develop Into Authors

Clifford Wise teacher Maria Lemme has been working with her students to become authors of their own e-books.

Using a website called Book Creator, the students are researching and writing books on New York State. Ms. Lemme had great success with this project last year and found it was a great way to connect with the community. "I printed them and had some sitting in the Book Shoppe, the public library and the school library as well. We are hoping if COVID protocol allows to do that again this year. The students love sharing their creativity!"



## Sixth Graders Artwork Inspired by Tibet

Long-term Substitute Art teacher Kate Granchelli recently covered a unit on Tibetan culture with her Clifford Wise sixth graders. The students learned about Buddhism and how Tibetan monks learned how to make intricate designs of mandala sand art. Sand art is considered sacred and comes from the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Mandala means circle in Sanskrit and its main goals are to reach individual enlightenment and the development of unconditional compassion and insight wisdom. "The students learned about radial symmetry and how the use of color is represented in art," explains Ms. Granchelli. "They did a great job with their projects."







## Bills Name Medina Football Coach Eric Valley Coach of the Year

Even though there has been no high school football this fall, the Buffalo Bills are still honoring coaches around Section VI for their contributions to their players, their school and their community.

Medina Varsity Football Coach Eric Valley was named the ADPRO Sports Coach of the Year for Section VI during the Bills vs. Dolphins game during halftime. Coach Valley is a Medina High School graduate who played college football at SUNY Cortland. Valley has been on the Mustangs coaching staff for 25 years and served as head coach for the past 13 years. "I am very grateful to be part of the Football program here in Medina," says Coach Valley. "This award is a reflection of our coaching staff, our student athletes, our district and community. A huge thank you to the Buffalo Bills organization and ADPRO Sports for supporting high school football in our area."



Photo courtesy of the Buffalo Bills – Medina Coach Eric Valley holds a football honoring his earning the Buffalo Bills Coach of the Year Award for Section VI.

The Bills' press release notes that in addition to serving as varsity football coach and athletic director, Valley has helped bring unified sports including basketball and bowling to the Medina athletic program. It also points out that Valley is very involved in the community. He works closely with the Medina LOYAL Football organization, has organized the "Miles for Heils" 5K run to raise money for a local family whose father passed away and the "Coins for Coopers" fundraiser which aided a local family who lost their home to a fire.

The honor earns Medina a \$1,400 grant as well as a \$2,000 credit from ADPRO Sports for the Mustangs football program.

"That is greatly appreciated," said Valley during an interview on the half-time program on the Bills website. "Obviously a small community like ours we can use every penny we get to make it a great experience for these kids as part of our program."

## Student Teaches Her BOCES Class Bunny Basics

Serenity Baumgart decided to share her passion for rabbit husbandry with her Animal Science classmates at the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center.

Teacher Paige Hungerford asked her if she wouldn't mind bringing in some of her pet rabbits and talking to the students about how to breed, raise and care for them. Serenity shared that she became interested in her hobby through the 4H, when someone volunteered to mentor her. "She taught me a lot about the different breeds of rabbits and what they require to stay healthy. It is something I really enjoy and nothing makes me happier to see a child's face when they are gifted one of them and I get to hand them over."

Serenity showed her class how to check the rabbits' health and check for any abnormalities. She talked about what she feeds her rabbits and what kind of equipment is required to raise them. She also talked about how to handle and show them and how to groom them. Mrs. Hungerford says she is grateful for Serenity for providing a very informative lesson to the class.



Serenity Baumgart.



## Cross Country Athlete Recognized with All-WNY Honors

After an amazing season, senior Cameron Castanon has earned Honorable Mention on the All-Western New York Boys' Cross Country team. Cameron was recognized for helping to lead Medina to its best season in 35 years. He won the Niagara Orleans All-League race and came in second in the Section VI Class C1 meet.

The Mustangs finished second to Newfane during both the N-O dual meet season, with a record of 5-1, and at the All-League meet. They also went on to finish second to Alden in the Class C1 race.



## Medina CSD Announces Students of the Month

The Medina Teachers Association, the Medina Central School District and the Medina Area Partnership are proud to announce their students of the month for November and December.

The award is a joint effort between the organizations to recognize students who go above and beyond to help teachers and fellow students succeed and enjoy school.

For the month of November, the business sponsor was Maison of Albion. The winners were:

- Oak Orchard: Second grader Kirsten Page, who was nominated by Mollie Mark.
- Clifford Wise: Fourth grader Savannah Thompson, who was nominated by Olivia Zambito and Morgan Brown.
- High School: Seventh grader Graycie Holmes, who was nominated by Jim Steele.

For the month of December, the business sponsor was Filomena's Favorites. The winners were:

- Oak Orchard: Third grader Rayyane Ali, who was nominated by Allison Harmon.
- Clifford Wise: Fourth grader Torry Dames, who was nominated by Karen Pane.
- High School: Ninth grader Kole Campbell, who was nominated by Samantha Rennie.

For the month of January, the business sponsor was Creekside Floral. The winners were:

- Oak Orchard: First grader Josiah Olsen, who was nominated by Allison Woodburn.
- Clifford Wise: Sixth grader Kaity Howe, who was nominated by Melissa Wroblewski.
- High School: Twelfth grader Jacob Velesko, nominated by Samantha Rennie.

Congratulations to all!

### November



Kirsten Page



Savannah Thompson



Graycie Holmes

### December



Rayyane Ali



Torry Dames



Kole Campbell

### January



Josiah Olsen



Kaity Howe



Jacob Velesko





## Baking Project Helps Highlight Kindness

Students in Kristen Armenia's Family and Consumer Science class took part in a program sponsored by the King Arthur Baking Company. The class received a grant to participate in the Bake for Good program the company runs. "It's a free outreach program for students in grades 4th to 12th and all our sixth graders at Clifford Wise took part in it," explains Mrs. Armenia. "The program has three goals: learn, bake and share."



Students learned to make bread from scratch at home using ingredients supplied by King Arthur Baking Company. The recipe makes two loaves, one to keep and one to share with someone in need or as an act of kindness.



Kristen Armenia with a bag that is going to a virtual student.

## PB & J Drive a Success

The Medina High School Student Association's Peanut Butter and Jelly drive has come to a close. Advisor Sara Cinquino says of the efforts, "In an unprecedented year we were still able to collect over 135 food items to donate to the local community. We are hoping to do another collection in the spring at some point."



Student Association members Jacob Velesko and Kristi Oliver.







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*Principal*

# Mapping It Out

Students at Clifford Wise Intermediate/ Middle School have been busy learning about geography of New York State and where their relative location is to the rest of the world.

Teachers Robin Shea and Olivia Zambito had their students start with the planet, then they narrowed it down to continent, country, state and city. "We partnered with Lee-Whedon Memorial Library for a virtual field trip exploring the library," explains Ms. Shea. "We usually go physically, but the library was nice enough to make us a video tour and that helped us with the project."



Savannah Thompson

# Fry Signs with Toledo University

Medina High School senior Brian Fry signed a letter of intent to continue his education and his baseball career at Division 1 Toledo University.

Fry is planning on majoring in Physical Education. He has been a starter on the Mustangs' Varsity Baseball team since eighth grade and is a three time Niagara-Orleans All-League honoree. He has also been a multiyear starter on the Varsity Football and Basketball teams.



Brian with his parents Brian Sr. and Michelle and his brother Brodie.