

The Wildcat



Fall



2024

Westport Middle-High School Newspaper

VOLUME 3, Issue 1

School Spirit Abounds with the Pep Band!

Lillian Schiff '29

Wildcat Staff Reporter

Can you feel the spirit? If you attend an event at which the Pep Band is playing, you can!

Pep band is an after school club that practices twice weekly. They play at athletic events and non-athletic events as requested by the school.

Pep Band—*more than just some kids playing music*—helps bring enthusiasm to the school community, and creates a feeling of participating in something larger. They function as a team, and see themselves that way as well, as part of a bigger whole. WMHS Athe

The Pep Band is led by music teacher, Mr. Christopher Nunes, who himself participated in a Pep Band when he was in college. “I was in pep band, always a musician, and big sports fan...I thought it would be fun since we don't have marching band” here in Westport.

Nunes has been leading Pep Band since its inception in 2017. A really memorable performance happened recently at the home opener of our Unified Sports Bocce Team in October.



Top Left to Right: James Gaboury, Ben Bernier, Finn Garside, Ethan Stewart, Trent Sousa, Sophia Pimental, Leah Peckham, Harry Gillet, and Matthew Machado **Bottom Back Row:** Jack Keene, Ethan Stewart, Karsyn Moniz (also face painting), Henry Gillet, Julia George **Bottom Front Row :** Colleen Smith, Tess Silvia, Holly Roy

File Photos

Haunted Hallways - All Treats, No Tricks



For nearly 20 years, gleeful ghosts and silly skeletons lurk the WHS halls when Halloween rolls around. The WHS student council and advisors, Mrs. Avila and Mrs. Lambert, hosted the spooky event on October 25. Attendees enjoyed a fun and haunting experience while helping benefit the school. Proceeds help fund high school student events such as homecoming, prom, field trips, and other experiences that support and enrich their Wildcat journey. Haunted Hallways turnout this year was great; it raised \$200+ and elicited lots of screams and giggles!





Dig Pink Event Raises Funds for Breast Cancer Awareness

Maigan Goldenbloom '28

Wildcat Staff Reporter

Westport High School's Annual Dig Pink event, organized by the Girls Varsity and JV volleyball teams, took place on October 4, and raised more than \$900 for breast cancer awareness.

This year's Dig Pink featured five exciting volleyball sets between Westport and Holbrook High School. The stands were a sea of pink as fans wore the color to show their solidarity with those affected by breast cancer. There were baked goods, pizza, candy, pink ribbon 'swag,' and lots of raffle prizes in the lobby for attendees to enjoy.

Schools can participate in Dig Pink by going to side-out.org/dig-pink. According to their website, "Dig Pink makes a real difference for players, patients, and communities. Each event raises funds that directly support our revolutionary research program and spreads word of our mission to the people in your community who could use our support."

Some years ago, Westport High School answered the call and incorporated Dig Pink into our Volleyball Teams' experience.

Coaches Monique Jones and Marissa Hutchison incorporated senior night into the event, recognizing eight graduating players: Zoey Sylvain, Jayda Pequita, Mackenzy Ponte, Layla Bossie, Jenna Egbe, Emma Hathaway, Ava Couto, and Samantha Rodrigues. It's clear that our students and school community get more than they give as they plan and implement our Dig Pink events.

Thanks to the generosity and involvement of the community, the event went off without a hitch. 100% of the proceeds were donated to The Side-Out Foundation - a non-profit organization that funds research and raises awareness for metastatic breast cancer.



The American Cancer Society estimated that in 2024, there would be 310,720 new cases of breast cancer in women and 2,790 new cases in men.



Wildcat File Photos

The Wildcat Staff

Staff

Abigail Cabral • Kyla Carmichael • Hailey Fernandes •
Maigan Goldenbloom • Jack Keane • Ryan Keane • Lillian Schiff

Advisors

Betheny Borges • Lisa Kaminski

**Thanks to the
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The Wildcat.**



The Electoral College: How America's Presidential Elections Work

November 5, 2024, marked a historic day: The re-election of Donald J. Trump as the 47th president. Every four years, the United States of America elects a new President, and it's not as simple as the candidate with the most votes wins. Recently, I interviewed Mr. Norman Abrahamson, one of our US History Teachers here at Westport High School, to learn more.

He began by telling me, "The starting point is Article Two of the Constitution." That's what describes how the president gets elected; **the president is not directly elected by the people, but each state is awarded a specific number of electoral votes, a number equal to the number of congressmen and senators that each state has.**



Mr. Abrahamson elaborated, "Massachusetts has nine or ten congressional districts. Let's say it's nine. There are nine congressmen and two senators, so that's a total of 11 electoral votes. It's equal to how many senators and how many Congresspeople are in each state."

Then Mr. Abrahamson proceeded to go further deeper into his example, using the current candidates. "So if we stick with Massachusetts with its total of 11, let's suppose that Vice President, Kamala Harris, gets 51% of the votes, she will get 100% of Massachusetts's electoral votes. It's all or nothing. So say Kamala only gets 20%, whoever gets the most votes wins. So if Trump were to get the most votes in Massachusetts, he would get all of Massachusetts's electoral votes."



*Above: Image Courtesy of aclu.org
Left: Image Courtesy of wikipedia
Right: Image Courtesy of cnn.com*

As readers now know, on the morning of November 6, 2024, it was announced that Donald J. Trump won the election, capturing a total of 312 electoral votes, while Vice President Kamala Harris lost, only garnering 226 electoral votes.

Many high school students will be eligible to vote in the next election. Be sure to register, and be sure to VOTE!

Kyla Carmichael '26

Wildcat Staff Reporter

Electoral Votes -State Law

Next, state law defines how those electoral votes are chosen. In 48 out of 50 states, it's winner take all. This means the candidate with the most votes in that state, gets all of that state's electoral votes.

There are two states that do not go by this "Winner Take All" policy when electing the President. The states with this exception are Maine and Nebraska. I asked for more details on the processes of these two states. "Their process is that rather than all or nothing, each congressional district has one electoral vote, and then there's two more electoral votes, which corresponds with the number of senators each state has, and whoever gets the most in the state gets those two. So, for instance, Maine has a total of four or five electoral votes. If one district votes for Trump and the other two districts vote for Harris, Trump would get that one electoral vote. So it would be split. So, in Maine in Nebraska, it's not a winner take all. It can get split."



In order for a President to win the election, they need to obtain a total of 270 electoral votes nationwide. But, what happens if neither candidate wins at least 270 votes? I inquired about this concept. "If no candidate gets 270, it goes to the House of Representatives, and each state delegation would cast one vote." I then asked Mr. Abrahamson about how many times this has happened, if at all, and if so, which elections and which Presidents. He replied, "That has only happened twice. It happened in the Adams v. Jefferson election, and it happened in the John Quincy Adams v. Jackson election." These elections took place in 1800 and 1824 respectively.



Westport's Got Gratitude!

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Giving Thanks Makes all the Difference

Lillian Schiff '29
Wildcat Staff Reporter

"I am grateful for the counselors that are here for me and support me."
Anonymous

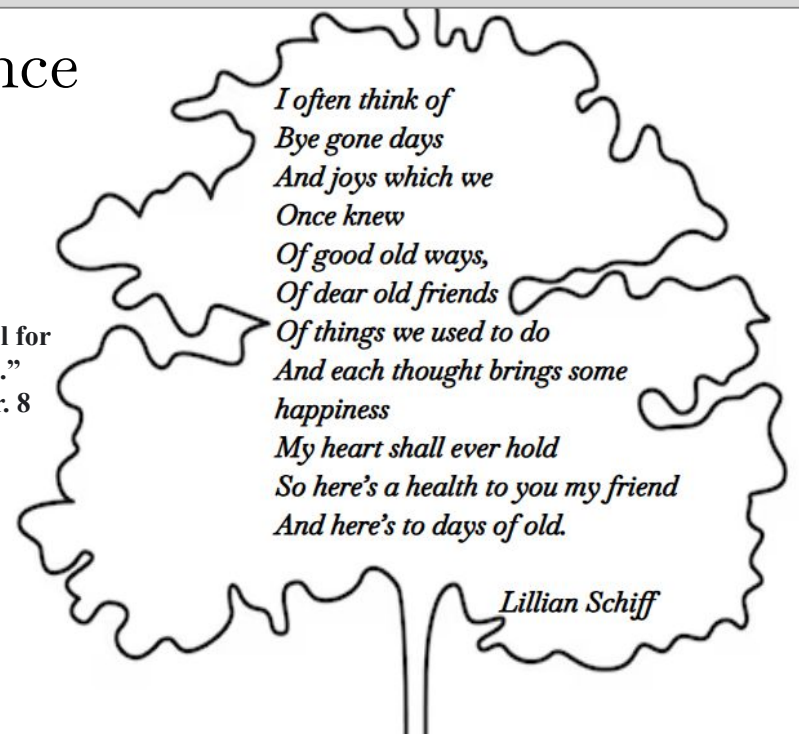
"I am grateful for the love and support of my family."
Audrey Xavier, Sophomore

"I am grateful for my friends and family who have stayed by my side."
Francine Swauger, Sophomore

"I am grateful for the amazing staff that work here."
Ben Marshall, Freshman

"I am grateful for being able to play basketball."
Aaron Desmarais, Freshman

"I am grateful for Mr. Flanagan."
John Bell, Gr. 8



Two of our New Math Teachers Count WMHS among their Blessings

Abigail Cabral '29
Wildcat Staff Reporter

WMHS welcomed four new math teachers at the start of the school year: Mrs. Moreno, Ms. Magnuski, Ms. Fiola, and Mr. Fonseca. I interviewed cousins, Mrs. Moreno and Ms. Fiola, for this piece.

Mrs. Moreno recently got married this summer—how exciting! Then, she sadly broke her ankle. The good news? She's now been given the all-clear by her doctor to stop wearing her boot!

When I asked her why she enjoys working at Westport so far, she said, "The students make it enjoyable for me to come to work each day." Before joining Westport, she taught sixth and seventh grade at Parker Middle School in Taunton, Massachusetts, for five years.

"My commute to Taunton was very long, and I needed a change. Even though eighth grade is different for me, I really am loving it here."



Mrs. Moreno and Ms. Fiola, two new teachers in the math department at WMHS. *File Photo*

Mrs. Moreno earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Bridgewater State University and her Master's degree from American International College. She also shared how great Westport's administration was in supporting her transition.

As a student in her class, I can confirm that Frida is definitely a mood booster! You might be wondering, "Who is Frida?" Frida is Mrs. Moreno's cat, and she uses her to motivate students.

For example, students create math posters and find creative ways to include Frida, and occasionally, Mrs. Moreno rewards them with Frida stickers. How cool is that?

The other teacher I interviewed, Ms. Fiola, is actually Mrs. Moreno's cousin! **It is a small world.** This is her first year teaching, and she loves the support she receives from both the administration and her coworkers.

Like Mrs. Moreno, Ms. Fiola graduated from Bridgewater State University. She found her way to Westport after attending a career fair, where Mr. Grandfield suggested she apply for a math position here. She uses candy to motivate her students, which in my opinion, is a pretty sweet idea!

Look for interviews of other new teachers in our next issue!



Ryan Keane '27

Wildcat Staff Reporter

Character lies not in public acts of virtue or visible mistakes, but in the consistent commitment to ethical and compassionate decision-making that positively affects both oneself and others.

–National Honor Society

WHS & WMS National Honor Societies

Every year at the Westport Middle High School, academically outstanding students are recognized for their hard work and dedication to their education by being inducted into one of the nation's most prestigious honor programs, the National Junior Honor Society and the National Honor Society.

This year, 16 students were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society and 17 students were inducted into the National Honor Society.

After being asked about what being an inductee means, the National Honor Society chapter advisor, Laura McMeniman, stated, “Inducted students have shown excellence in the four pillars of the NHS - Leadership, Service, Character, and Scholarship.

The faculty council looks for these qualities when deciding to induct a potential candidate. As a member, students are encouraged to further develop their leadership, service, and character.”

According to National Junior Honor Society chapter advisor Mary-Catherine Santos, “Academically they must average 93 or better in all core subjects, have no behavior issues and be approved by the teacher advisory board. Achievement in all of these categories is no small feat.” Members of the NJHS and NHS are excellent ambassadors for what Westport Community Schools strives for their students to exemplify.

Westport High School & Westport Middle School 2024 National Honor Society Inductees

WHS

Hannah Abrams
Jaira Bernardo
Emma Bessette
Lilian Carvalho
Julia George
Henry Gillet
Emma Hathaway
Olivia Hok
John Keane Jr.
Emma Rapoza
Holly Roy
Tess Silvia
Colleen Smith

WMS

Alexandrina Branco
Lachlan Babbitt
Mirai Dias
Elijah Bennett
Hailey Koster
Kendall Leary
Leah Raposo
Arron Raposa
Celina Pedro
Lillian Schiff
Sophia Nickelson
Troy Pacheco
Margaret Twomey
Bella Viveiros

MS Student Council Update



WMS student council has been very busy these past two months sending thank you notes to the faculty and staff for all that they do and spreading messages of kindness to the student body. They wrapped up their themes of gratitude and kindness with the Food & Family Fun Drive. They collected 77 items for Toys For Tots and 1,626 items for the Westport Food Pantry.

Thank you to all who donated!





Mrs. Lees Honored as 2024 Outstanding Educator of the Year

According to the Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress website, the congress has actively worked toward their mission “to ensure that all individuals in Massachusetts with Down syndrome are valued, included, and given every opportunity to pursue fulfilling lives.” For the past eleven years, Mrs. Lees has worked alongside her Westport Community elementary, middle, and high school colleagues to provide sophomore Brenna Legendre with a rewarding educational experience.

Mrs. Lees was nominated by Kim Legendre, Brenna’s mother. Legendre is grateful for Mrs. Lees’ commitment to inclusive education and constant collaboration with all school personnel as she navigates, along with Brenna, the high school labyrinth.

If there is a seminar or meeting to attend, an article to read, or a podcast to listen to with helpful insight for Mrs. Lees, she is first in line. Brenna’s mother states that Mrs. Lees takes her job “to another level,” doing everything to ensure that Brenna thrives in and out of school. Needless to say, receiving Educator of the Year is a win for Mrs. Lees, Brenna and her family, and the entire community. She perfectly represents the qualities of a dedicated educator by embodying the ideal traits of compassion, commitment, and excellence each and every day.

On behalf of WMHS,
“Congratulations,” Mrs. Lees!

—Wildcat Staff

Global Down Syndrome Foundation reports that “38% of Americans know someone with Down Syndrome.” Also, it estimates the “worldwide population of people with Down syndrome at more than 6 million.”



Mrs. Sherrie Lees was recently celebrated as the 2024 Outstanding Educator of the Year by the Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress. Mrs. Lees and WHS sophomore Brenna Legendre

Photo Courtesy of S. Lees

WMS Pays Tribute to Veterans on Veterans Day

My Heroes by Paige Morrisette Grade 8

Those fateful days away from home. The crushing things you have been shown.
Dark, terrifying, dreary nights. Harsh training and brutal fights.
Missions fraught with danger. Hard to appease anger.
You stayed strong, with wounds so deep. You are the reason I can sleep.
I show you my gratitude here and now. I hope you accept the solemn sound.
You need to know we all care. We all hope to take away from the torture you bear.
Today the chorus sings for you. The student council speaks too.
The band will play in honor of this day. The audience watches the whole display.
We thank you for all you have done. Now take a break and have some fun.
Take some time for yourself. Focus on your own health.
You granted us freedom. We hope to grant you peace.
You made the world a better place. Because of you America is a better space.
You are my hero, I hope you see. All you have done means so much to me.

View the full ceremony at Westport Community TV
“Westport Middle School Veterans Day Ceremony”



Image Courtesy of stockcake.com

**“As we express
our gratitude,
we must never
forget that
the highest
appreciation is
not to utter
words, but to live
by them.”**

JOHN F. KENNEDY

Creative WHS 'Cats



Stepping into the Future through a Variety of Artistic Media



High schoolers are lacing up their shoes and walking toward bright futures. Mrs. Lambert's talented art students have produced some fantastic work. The charcoal shoe drawings are so realistic; comfortable and ready to wear.



GOOD SHOES
TAKE YOU
GOOD PLACES.

Wildcat File Photos

Pep Rally Hallways



Hoping their futures are as friendly as this alien, WHS seniors are ready for the challenge of the 'real world.' No matter how far they travel throughout the universe, the mothership will be supporting them, accepting updates, and planning for reunions.

Walking through the Senior hallway, there's a calm energy that contrasts with the bold imagery of the rocket, symbolizing the seniors' launch into successful and rewarding futures.



Getting in on Pep Rally fun are the Junior Minion class, the Sophomore Winter Wonderland class, and the Freshman Gingerbread men. Student Council members from each grade worked tirelessly on their displays. What a show of school spirit!





Creative WMS 'Cats

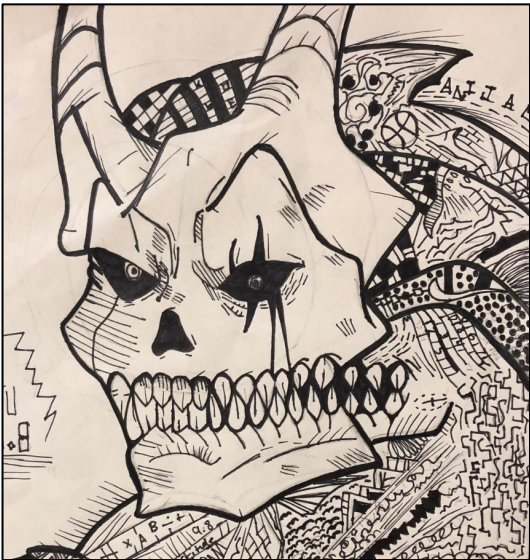


After the Storm By Charles Canney

Waves crash on large rocks
Lighthouse among the blue sea
Bright skies, clear and blue

Mrs. Bramwell's middle school artists are proof of the talent found in our school. Students explore their talent and creative personalities with their teacher's modeling, encouragement, and guidance.

Bottom Left: The fluid, organic lines of **neurographic art** help to reduce stress and promote a sense of tranquility and inner peace.



Fishing Vessels By Brody Veracka

Vast fishing vessels
Waiting to be called to sea
Ready to be free

Mrs. Tripp's English classes studied **haiku poetry**. Haiku poems are **traditional Japanese poetry** dating back to the 13th century. According to the Academy of American Poets, haikus are defined by several elements. They are -

- three-line poems with seventeen syllables
- written in a 5/7/5 syllable count
- focused on images from nature
- emphasize simplicity, intensity, and directness of expression

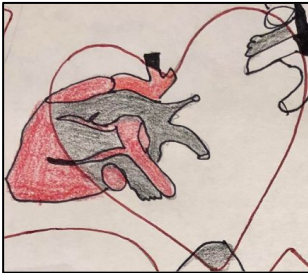


Best Bee By Malia Martinez

The bee is graceful
And spreads its wings out to world
As it shares love out

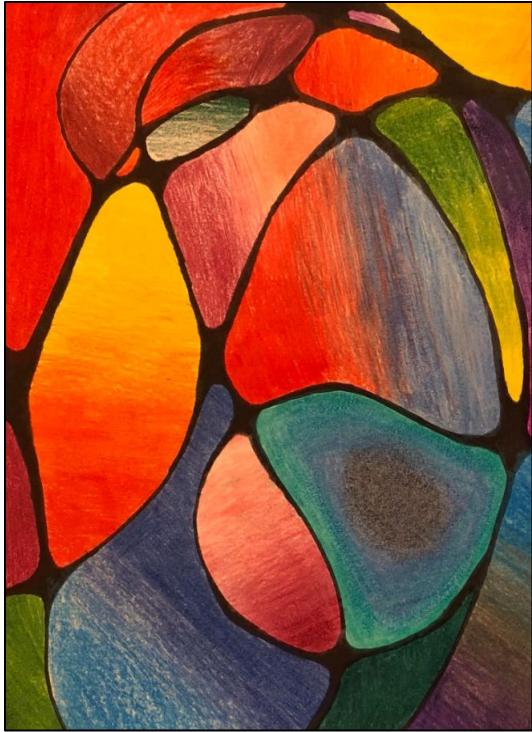
Ocean Sunset
By Olivia Fortier

The dark gray clouds
The soothing cool blue
water
Serene surroundings



*That's Mr. Sparrow to
You!*
By Alyvia Rebelo

Mr. Sparrow, sir
We call you by this
term, sir
So you don't get angst



Wildcat Sports - Coaches' Corner



Coaches Fontaine, Teixeira, and Muello on their Teams

Varsity Field Hockey coach, Sue Fontaine, credits her team's success this season to "dedicated hearts, fortitude, and a Team First attitude." Graduating captains, Emma Bessette, Jada Thurston, and Colleen Smith brought strength to the field in more ways than one. These three Wildcats "stepped up to the challenge" when the team faced roster changes due to injuries. The senior Wildcats demonstrated their player versatility to help secure the Mayflower Conference Championship. Well done!

This Fall '24 Middle School Boys Soccer season is one that Coach Amy Teixeira is very fond of. She recalled her players' growth both as "athletes and individuals" as a season highlight. Four-year starter and captain, Nick Jusseaume, will be "greatly missed" on the pitch. Teixeira said of Jusseaume, "His commitment to the team and "all in, all the time" attitude, set a positive example for his teammates and a "fun environment all around!" Teixeira is excited for next year, even with the loss of seven graduating 8th graders pictured below.

Coach Muello's Girls' Varsity Soccer program had a spectacular record setting season making it to the "Sweet 16" in the division 5 MIAA tournament. Captains Julia George and Tess Silvia "have contributed so much to the success of the program" and are "truly amazing young women." Muello is very proud of his team and "their hard work and memorable achievements."

—Wildcat Staff Reporting



Above: Field hockey Senior Captains, Emma Bessette, Jada Thurston, and Colleen Smith
Right: Volleyball Senior Captains, Tess Silvia and Julia George

GRADUATING CAPTAINS



Standing: Eighth Graders - Henry Hall, Lucas Lescarbeau, **Captain Theo Canney**, Lucas Gifford.

Kneeling : Eighth Graders - Troy Pacheco, **Captain Nick Jusseaume**, Cameron Pinkham
Photo Courtesy of Amy Teixeira



Standing: Coach Thibodeau, Holly Roy, Alex Neronha, Julia George, Jacqui Jusseaume, Julia Raposa, Audrey Xavier, Morgan Pacheco, Kay Butter, Harper Thibodeau, Bailey Hart, Brook Crocker, Avery P, Coach Muello
Kneeling : Tess Silvia, Sophia Nickelson, Sofia Babb, Lily Veracka, Ella Camara, Adyline Reynolds, Margaret Twomey, Kenzie Reynolds



Sports Scoreboard

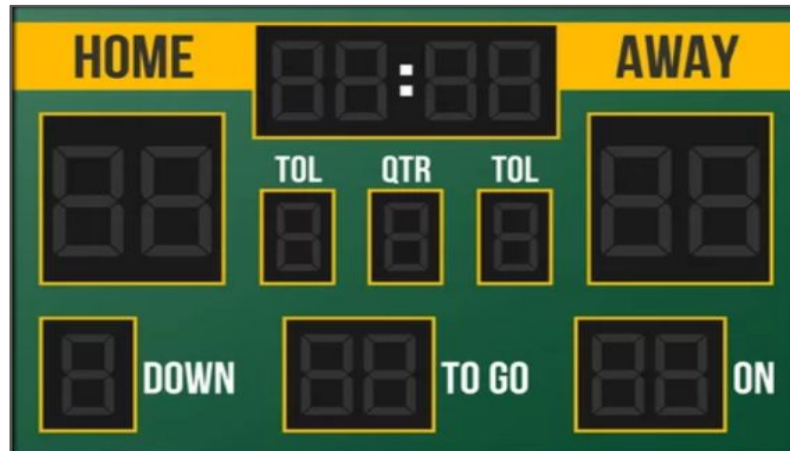
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Co-Op Football 4-6

The Tritons' dominate wins over Mayflower Conference opponents, Holbrook High School and Cape Cod Regional Technical High School, were impressive and prove the team has the talent to build on their success.

Wildcat student athletes brought dedication, commitment, and talent to home and away fields, courts, and fairways. The highs and lows of this year's Fall sports leave the athletes more motivated, as well as resilient, to continue their school sports careers. Congratulations to all team members, coaches, fans, and families that made the season thrilling, rewarding, and enjoyable!



Images Courtesy of adobe.com



Golf 11-3-1

Claiming the Mayflower Conference Title for the first time in school history and securing their third consecutive MIAA State tournament appearance, the Wildcat Golf Team made great strides. Seniors, Owen Boudria and Bryton Graham, enjoyed a successful season



Varsity Boys Soccer 13-4-3

Led by a veteran squad of ten seniors, whose experience and skill showed in every game, the Wildcats won the 2024 Mayflower Conference. In the state tournament, Westport blanked Hull High School 3-0 to move to the second round.

Junior Varsity Boys Soccer 14-0

An impressive 63 goals for the season is only part of what made this team the best JV team in the area. While some players were called up for varsity or were put on the injured roster, the JV team rallied and demonstrated the pitch warrior mentality.

MS Boys Soccer 2-11-2

A challenging season was met head-on by a team of players that displayed warrior effort, fierce determination, and admirable sportsmanship.

Varsity Girls Soccer 13-2-3

It wasn't luck that brought the team to the Sweet 16 in the division 5 MIAA tournament. It was years of practice and playing experience perfectly woven together with strategy, player skill, and grit. This team was exciting to watch and has more to prove next year!

MS Girls Soccer 2-9-1

The team had a successful season this year thanks to its leadership and teamwork. The players' overall work ethic, dedication, and improved skills were consistent throughout the season and resulted in an enjoyable and rewarding season. We are looking forward to an even better year next year. Let's go Wildcats!!!

Varsity Field Hockey 10-5-3

The battle-cry cheer, "Everything!" helped the team play their hearts out with everything that they had. This Wildcat attitude continued all season long, carrying them to seven wins!

MS Field Hockey

The team competed throughout the season armed with positivity. Each player's skills were strengthened and there's no doubt the athletes have a bright future in field hockey here in town.

**Compiled by
Jack Keane '25**

*Wildcat Sports Editor
& Wildcat Staff*

Varsity Volleyball 11-11

The team earned a spot in the MIAA State Tournament. This accomplishment is a testament to their hard work and grit, showcasing their ability to rise to the occasion and compete at a high level

Junior Varsity Volleyball 17-1

Players persevered, learned, and grew as athletes throughout the season, having lost only the first game of the schedule. They never accepted defeat and always kept their heads held high. Many of our wins were due to sheer grit and determination!

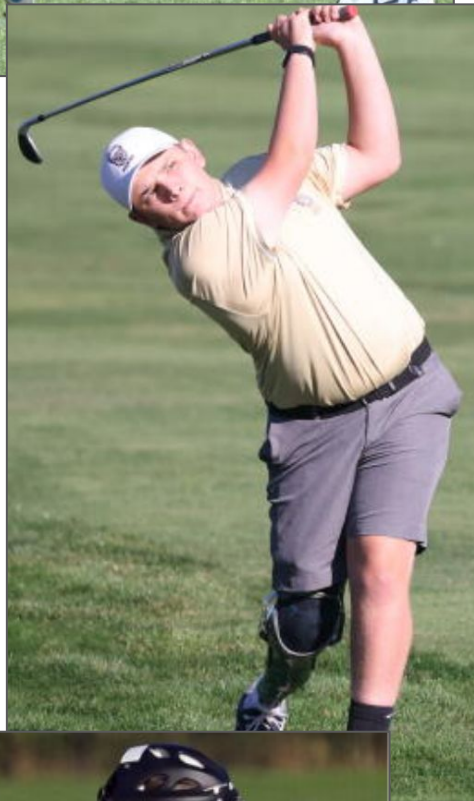
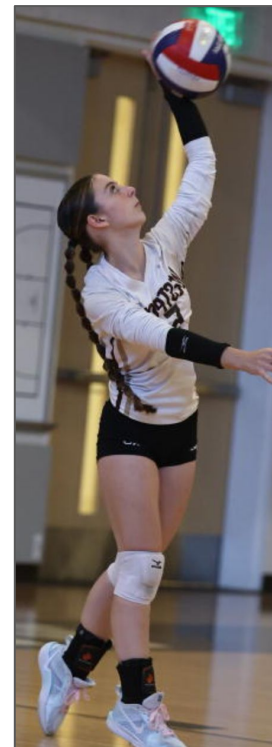
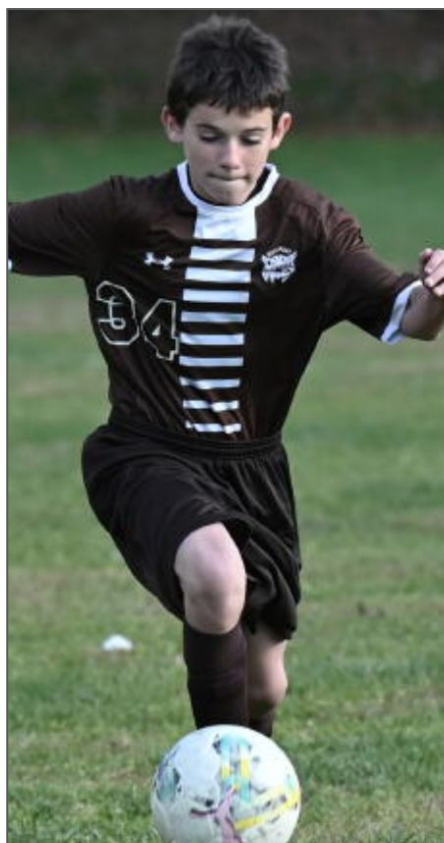
Freshman Volleyball 5-5

The Freshman Volleyball team had 20 enthusiastic players! All athletes strove hard to win each match, from diving for balls on the court to screaming on the sideline during each point. Each member contributed to a fun season.

Sports Photastic Moments



WMS & WHS Fall Sports in Action



—Photos Courtesy of imageflo.com





Sports - A New Venture

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Rolling into Victory: Unified Sports Bocce's Inaugural Season

Hailey Fernandes

'31

Wildcat Staff Reporter

It felt like the entire school community came out to cheer on the school's first ever bocce team during their first match against Norton MS on October 9. Students, school personnel, athletes' families, and the WMHS Pep band filled the front lawn and experienced the thrill of competition and sportsmanship.

The athletes showed incredible teamwork, and it was clear that everyone had a great time. Seventh grader David Klecan, was instrumental in the team's success. Proudly wearing jersey #47, he had a clear advantage,

as bocce is a pastime in his family.

Principal Charette enjoyed supporting the team. "The bocce season was so wonderful, and it was great to see the teamwork of everyone involved. I am so proud of the athletes and their coaches."

It is clear the unified sports program has a strong future if this initial season is any indication.

Mrs. Dianne Aldrich's team had a great season! The unified bocce team played four matches with a 3:1 record. The team had both home court advantage and went on the road for away games.



Front Row: Kayleighana Barcellos, Mrs. Aldrich, Ogena Kuzman, Mrs. Bernard **Middle Row :** Nathaniel Fontes, David Klecan, Nicole Botelho, Jayden Barcellos, Zach Bernier, Hank Vieira, Luke Abrams, Sophia Benjamin, Leah Peckham, Sydney Neronha, Hannah Tavares, Hailey Tavares, Savannah Medeiros
Back Row: Mr. DiPrato, Mr. Aldrich

Wildcat File Photo



Above - Custodian Tracey DiPrato and sixth grader Hank Vieira cheer on teammate Nicole Botelho.

Wildcat File Photo

"Today was a wonderful day for Westport Middle High School. As I watched our students and staff on the field either participating in bocce, playing in the Pep Band, or cheering on for our community, I was overcome with pride. What a day to be a Wildcat!"

Mrs. Charette, WMHS Principal



"This was our first Unified Event in Westport history and our school community made it one to never forget. Inclusivity is so important and the benefits from it shined today!"

Mrs. Aldrich, Teacher



Sophia Benjamin, Leah Peckham, and David Klecan celebrate their team's performance.

Wildcat File Photo

Thanks to the Westport Education Foundation for generously funding this issue of *The Wildcat*.