

WHITESBORO

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

INSPIRE | CULTIVATE | EMPOWER



On December 15, the Whitesboro Music Department proudly presented the annual High School Holiday Concert at the high school auditorium.

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FEBRUARY 2026

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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 in which 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 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



WHITESBORO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PERFORMS AT NYSSMA ALL-STATE CONFERENCE



On December 4-6, Whitesboro High School student Lucianna Walsh traveled to Rochester as a selected musician for the New York State School Music Association's (NYSSMA) 89th Annual Winter Conference.

Lucianna, a senior violist, began her journey to All-State in May 2025. She prepared and performed a Level 6 All-State NYSSMA solo (the most advanced level in New York State) and was adjudicated by a trained NYSSMA official. A total of 170 viola students across New York State in grades 10-11 auditioned on this level. Lucianna was one of 30 violists selected from across all of New York State for this year's festival. As a selected musician, she had the opportunity to work with an incredible professional conductor and collaborate with other students who share the same love and passion for music.

All of her hard work culminated on December 6, when Lucianna showcased her talents alongside 77 other amazingly talented string students from across New York State. She performed as part of the All-State String Orchestra ensemble at the renowned Eastman Theatre in Rochester.

Congratulations, Lucianna! The Whitesboro CSD is incredibly proud of your hard work and applauds you on this outstanding achievement.

THREE WHITESBORO ATHLETES SIGN LETTERS OF INTENT TO PLAY IN COLLEGE

Three of Whitesboro's star athletes made their futures official by signing letters of intent on November 12 and December 3, committing to play at the collegiate level in the 2026-27 academic year. November 12 was the first day that colleges could offer student-athletes letters of intent for their respective sports and December 3 marked the first day colleges were permitted to extend football letters of intent.

Addison Cook: Binghamton University Softball

Whitesboro softball player Addison Cook has signed with Binghamton University in Binghamton. The Binghamton Bearcats women's softball team is an NCAA Division I program that competes in the America East Conference. Addison plans to major in human development with a minor in elementary education.

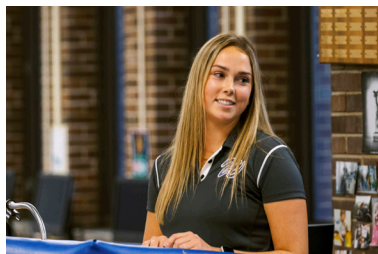
Kadence Heinlein: Roberts Wesleyan Field Hockey

Whitesboro field hockey player Kadence Heinlein has signed with Roberts Wesleyan University in Rochester. The Roberts Redhawks women's field hockey team is an NCAA Division II program participating in the East Coast Conference. Kadence intends to pursue a double major in forensics and psychology.

Kevin George: Colgate University Football

Whitesboro football player Kevin George has signed with Colgate University in Hamilton. The Colgate Raiders are an NCAA Division I program competing in the Patriot League Conference. Kevin plans to major in economics.

Congratulations to Addison, Kadence and Kevin on this tremendous achievement, and best of luck as you prepare for your academic and athletic journeys at the collegiate level!



SPRING SPORTS START DATES

Try outs begin for JV/varsity sports on March 9 and for modified sports on March 23.

Department Spotlight:
Nursing

This month, we're shining a light on the incredible work done within our Nursing Department.

Who We Are:

The Nursing Department is made up of eight dedicated individuals, along with several dependable substitute nurses. Its goal is to uphold the District's mission by supporting the health and well-being of students and, in turn, promoting their academic progress and success. According to the National Association of School Nurses, the primary role of a school nurse is to support student learning.

What We Do:

The department plays a vital role in providing first aid and emergency care, assessing and mitigating illnesses and injuries, performing mandatory health screenings and immunizations, dispensing prescribed medications, educating students on self-care and health concerns, developing health care plans, providing information about emerging health issues in the District and more.

Here are a couple of things the team has been working on recently:

- **Updating Nursing Forms:** The nurses have been reviewing all New York State rules and regulations, District policies and standing orders and comparing them to current forms to ensure state requirements are being met.
- **Immunization Audits:** The nurses have been auditing all student health records for New York State requirements and standards compliance to ensure a safe learning environment for students.

Behind the Scenes:

Did you know that New York State was the birthplace of the entire school nursing profession in the US? Lina Rogers Struthers was the first school nurse in New York City in 1902, hired to reduce absenteeism. Her work led to a national movement and shaped modern school health services.

Looking Ahead:

We're excited about strengthening the Nursing Department and unifying its resources. We're committed to helping students by removing health barriers to learning and promoting public health within the District.



Varsity Ice Hockey Continues Tradition of Giving Back

On December 15, the Whitesboro varsity ice hockey team continued its heartwarming tradition of spreading holiday cheer by delivering toys to elementary students.

Utilizing funds from the Whitesboro Hockey Boosters, the team's seniors personally purchased and wrapped gifts together. They then visited Mrs. Schoen's classroom at Westmoreland Road Elementary to spread a little holiday cheer. The visit was about more than just gifts; the players spent quality time with the students by reading holiday stories to the class, handing out personalized gifts and engaging one-on-one to help the children unwrap and assemble their new toys.

The elementary students had a blast spending time with the "big kids" from the hockey team. The seniors enjoyed the experience just as much, exchanging stories and laughter with the younger students throughout the afternoon.

This long-standing tradition has been a staple of the hockey program for many years, with the team rotating to a different school or classroom each year to ensure the holiday spirit reaches every corner of the District.

A special thank you to the Whitesboro Hockey Boosters for their generous support in making this meaningful event a success!





High School Holiday Concert

On December 15, the Whitesboro Music Department proudly presented the annual High School Holiday Concert at the high school auditorium. The evening featured the musical talents of ninth through twelfth grade student musicians in the a cappella chorus, symphonic band and orchestra, concluding with a heartwarming community singalong.

A Cappella Chorus (directed by Mrs. Sarah DePalma) performed:

- o "Christmas Processional" (Linda Spevacek)
- o "Seasons" (Ola Gjeilo, lyrics by Charles Anthony Silvestri)
- o "Spirit of the Season" from "The Polar Express" (Ballard & Silvestri, arr. Jamey Ray, as recorded by the a cappella group Voctave)

Symphonic Band (directed by Mrs. Nicole Williams) performed:

- o "Among the Clouds" (Brian Balmages)
- o "Grown-Up Christmas List" (arr. Michael Brown)
 - Soloist: Mrs. Sarah DePalma
- o "An American Christmas" (arr. Robert W. Smith)

Orchestra (directed by Mrs. Millicent Ruggio) performed:

- o String Orchestra
 - "Inverno: Scenes from Vivaldi's Winter" (Antonio Vivaldi, arr. Todd Parrish)
 - "Calm and Bright" (arr. Katie O'Hara LaBrie)
- o Full Orchestra
 - "A Christmas Festival" (Leroy Anderson, arr. John Moss)
 - Featuring the a cappella chorus



Scan the QR code to watch a video highlighting the holiday season at the Whitesboro CSD, featuring the high school a cappella chorus.

The festivities concluded with the "A Christmas Festival" singalong, where audience members were invited to join the students in performing holiday favorites, including "Joy to the World," "Deck the halls," "Silent Night," "Jingle Bells" and "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Congratulations to all of our talented student musicians on an outstanding performance!

A special thank you to the Whitesboro Central School District Board of Education, District administration, Music Boosters, high school faculty/staff, custodial team and Mr. Justin Gates and Mr. Bill Di Paolo of Entertainment Services (sound and lighting crew) for their support in making this event possible. Thank you as well to parents/guardians, students and community members for their continued support of the Whitesboro music program!



Whitesboro High School Honors Veterans with **FIELD OF FLAGS FUNDRAISER**

Whitesboro High School honored Veterans Day with a meaningful and successful Field of Flags fundraiser. During the week of November 10, more than 100 American flags were proudly displayed on school grounds — each one dedicated to a veteran who holds a special place in someone's life.

In partnership with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) organization, students and staff organized the event to pay tribute to local veterans while raising essential funds to support our Nation's ill and injured heroes. For more than a century, DAV has helped veterans of all generations lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity, providing over one million veterans each year with benefits assistance, employment resources and free transportation to VA medical appointments.

"Every flag in the field holds a unique story about a veteran who served and sacrificed to protect the freedoms we hold dear," said Barry Jesinoski, DAV CEO and national adjutant. "We are grateful for each person who donated to this beautiful tribute to our heroes. Even more, it provides life-changing support for our Nation's veterans and their families."

The fundraiser generated more than \$2,200, benefiting the DAV, the Whitestown American Legion Post 1113, Feed Our Vets Utica, the Utica Center for Development Veterans Services and the revitalization of the World War I/World War II/Korean War monument on the Parkway, a project spearheaded by Green Utica.

"This provided a wonderful opportunity for our community to honor those who have served and sacrificed to protect our freedom at home and abroad," said Whitesboro Class of 2025 Co-Advisor Anthony L. Coriale Jr.

The event not only highlighted the strength of community spirit, but also demonstrated the lasting impact that collective gratitude and service can create. Whitesboro High School extends its sincere thanks to all who participated and helped honor our veterans in such a meaningful way.



NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY *Induction Ceremony*

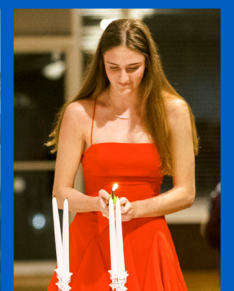
On November 12, Whitesboro High School formally inducted 74 junior and senior students into its chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS). Students were invited to apply after meeting the rigorous academic scholarship standards, and candidates were further required to demonstrate commitment to the four pillars of NHS: Leadership, Service, Scholarship and Character.

The induction ceremony took place at Hart's Hill Inn, where a string quartet, led by Mrs. Ruggio, welcomed the inductees and their families. The ceremony featured speeches from the NHS officers, each reflecting on one of the four foundational pillars:

- President Genevieve Michel welcomed guests, spoke on the ideals of NHS, Leadership and the NHS Pledge and presented Tokens of Membership.
- Vice President Karley Hughes spoke on Character.
- Secretary Lylah Van Dyk spoke on Scholarship and presented Tokens of Membership.
- Treasurer Angelina Myalik spoke on Service.

The newest members were presented with their Tokens of Membership, and High School Principal Mr. Cognetti offered congratulatory remarks. National Honor Society Advisor Mr. Ryan closed the ceremony by emphasizing the significance of this achievement and encouraging students to take pride in their accomplishments as they continue their journey toward success.

Congratulations to all 74 inductees on this well-deserved achievement!



PARKWAY ART CLUB SPREADS HOLIDAY CHEER AT BOULEVARD DINER

On November 25, sixth-grade Art Club students from Whitesboro Middle School spent the day spreading holiday cheer at the Boulevard Diner.

The students created colorful, festive window art for the diner and its patrons, transforming the space with their creativity. As they painted, diners and passersby paused to admire the students' artwork and joyful spirit.

The event was a wonderful opportunity for students to connect with the community while brightening someone's day. The students had a blast, and onlookers were delighted to see their smiling faces and holiday-themed designs!

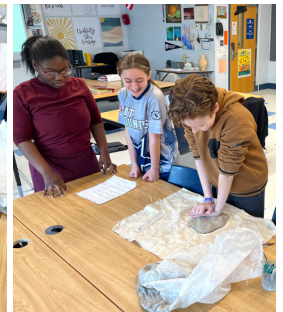
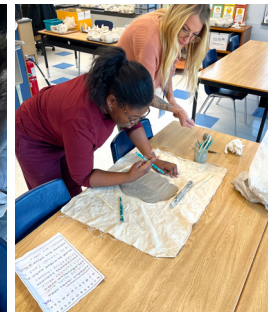


SIXTH GRADERS GO ANCIENT:

EXPLORING CUNEIFORM IN SOCIAL STUDIES

Mr. McQueen and Ms. Countryman's classes took a trip back in time — not by bus, but by stylus. As part of their unit on Ancient Mesopotamia, students practiced writing in cuneiform, the wedge-shaped script used by early scribes. Leaning over clay tablets (and their modern paper equivalents), they pressed marks carefully, comparing how symbols represented sounds, numbers and ideas long before alphabets as we know them existed.

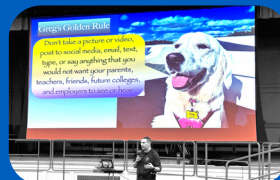
The classroom buzzed with curiosity as students experimented with different marks to spell their names, record simple inventories and try their hand at keeping "accounts" like ancient merchants. Many remarked on how precise and patient those early scribes must have been — and how much they enjoyed making history come alive.



MIDDLE SCHOOL HOSTS INTERNET SAFETY PRESENTATION

On December 17, the Whitesboro Middle School Campus hosted an Internet Safety Presentation for students in grades six through eight. The session was led by Officer Gregory Toussaint, head of the Oriskany Police Department Cyber Crimes Unit, and provided students with essential tools and knowledge to help them navigate today's evolving digital landscape safely and responsibly.

Proactive initiatives like this presentation are a direct reflection of the Whitesboro Central School District's commitment to safety and security. By incorporating these lessons into the middle school experience, the District ensures that students are not only technologically proficient, but also equipped with the critical thinking skills needed to make safe and informed decisions in a connected world.



Whitesboro Middle School Campus **HOSTS ANNUAL METRIC NIGHT**

The Whitesboro Middle School Campus's annual Metric Night, held on November 10, took on an exciting Olympic-inspired theme: the "Metric Olympics." This family-friendly competition invited students in grades six through eight to team up with a parent or guardian to form their own Olympic "teams," ready to go for the gold through a series of metric-focused challenges.

Throughout the evening, teams rotated through a lineup of Olympic-style "events," each designed to put their metric measurement skills to the test. Participants competed in hands-on activities involving estimating weights, volumes and lengths — turning math practice into high-energy competition. Whether they were launching objects for maximum distance, calculating precise measurements, or racing to complete conversions, students had the chance to apply classroom knowledge in a fun, real-world setting.

After all events were completed and scores were tallied, the medalists for each challenge were announced. Congratulations to all of our winning teams! It was a memorable evening filled with teamwork, learning and the true spirit of friendly competition — an Olympic-worthy celebration of math and family engagement.



NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION CEREMONY

On October 21, new members of the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) were inducted during a ceremony held in the middle school auditorium.

Opening remarks were made by Middle School Assistant Principal Mr. Spost and students then spoke about each of the NJHS values. National Junior Honor Society President April LaPage spoke about Character and Service, NJHS Vice President Theodore Meier spoke about Citizenship, NJHS Secretary Morgan Gaspa spoke about Leadership and NJHS Treasurer Adam Pekmez spoke about Scholarship.

Certificates were given to each new member of NJHS and Dr. Bellair, Superintendent of Schools, was the guest speaker. Following the guest speaker, Middle School Principal Mr. Egresits provided the closing remarks.

Congratulations to the newest members of NJHS!



NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY SPREADS COMFORT AND CARE AT WYNN HOSPITAL



The National Junior Honor Society worked on a group service project to benefit surgery patients at the Wynn Hospital. Students made pillows with assistance from Mrs. Wells-Philo and Ms. Tucci and wrote “get well soon” cards in English and Spanish. A representative from the Wynn Hospital picked up the pillows and cards on the morning of December 18. Over 20 pillows and 50 cards will be going to future surgery patients during the winter season.

WORLD LANGUAGE HIGHLIGHTS

This fall, students in world language classes engaged in hands-on, culturally rich activities that brought language learning to life.

French students in grades seven and eight participated in an exciting STEM challenge by building newspaper Eiffel Towers. Inspired by one of the most visited monuments in the world, students worked collaboratively to create replicas of the Parisian landmark using only newspaper, tape and plenty of determination. The finished towers are now proudly displayed in the French classroom.

In addition, the middle school celebrated National French Week in French classes. Students enjoyed tasting crêpes with Mme. Cidzik and Mme. Kostolecki and shared their learning by reading in French and highlighting aspects of French culture during the daily announcements.

Spanish students also made a positive impact beyond the classroom. Mrs. Discavage’s eighth grade Spanish classes recognized National Bullying Prevention Month by creating bilingual compliment posters for both the middle school and Parkway buildings. This activity reinforced how adjectives are written in Spanish and how they change based on who is being addressed, while also promoting kindness and positivity throughout the school community.

These engaging experiences highlight how world language classes connect language skills, culture and real-world applications.





On December 11, the Whitesboro Music Department proudly presented the Middle School Campus Annual Winter Concert at the middle school auditorium. The evening showcased the musical talents of the combined seventh and eighth grade orchestra, sixth through ninth grade chorale and eighth grade wind ensemble. Family members, friends and classmates enjoyed a festive program featuring a joyful blend of holiday favorites and contemporary secular selections.

A Cappella Chorus (directed by Mrs. Sarah DePalma) performed:

- o "Fum, Fum, Fum" (Traditional Spanish Carol, arr. Michael Story)
- o "Sweet Petite Winter Suite" (Brian Balmages)
 - II. "Hot Chocolate"
 - III. "Peppermint Bark"
 - IV. "Gingerbread Man"
- o "A Boomwhacker Christmas" (Richard Meyer)
 - Soloists: Juliana Busch, Derek Laskowski, Lainie LaValley and Jane Meyers

Sixth through Ninth Grade Chorale (directed by Miss Danielle Hughes, accompanied by Ms. Jane Beck) performed:

- o "Beautiful December" (Amy Bernon)
 - Soloists: Joshua Chaya, Hadley Dellecese, Logan Hagadorn, April LaPage, Kambria Occhipinti, Hannah Oder and Charlotte Rothdiener
- o "California Dreamin" (Roger Emerson)"

Eighth Grade Wind Ensemble (directed by Mrs. Nicole Williams) performed:

- o "Aggressivo" (Randall Standridge)
- o "Dark Ride" (Randall Standridge)
- o "Carol of the Bells" (Leontovich, arr. Chambers)

Congratulations to all of our talented student musicians on an outstanding performance!

A special thank you to the Whitesboro Central School District Board of Education, District administration, Music Boosters, middle school and Parkway faculty/ staff, custodial team, Entertainment Services (sound and lighting crew) and Information and Instructional Technology Department staff members Mr. Jeremy Brown and Mr. Keith Mottley for their support in making this event possible. Thank you as well to parents/guardians, students and community members for their continued support of the Whitesboro music program!



DEERFIELD ELEMENTARY UCFC CLINIC

This January, fourth graders at Deerfield Elementary participated in a soccer clinic hosted by the Utica City Football Club (UCFC). Students spent the morning at the Adirondack Bank Center engaged in interactive exercises and drills led by the UCFC players.

The clinic fostered teamwork and physical conditioning and concluded with a player meet-and-greet and autograph session. Students also observed a portion of the UCFC team practice and were thrilled to receive vouchers for a future game. We are grateful to the UCFC players and staff for the invitation to their facility and for providing a memorable experience for our students.



A Sweet Day at Deerfield



Deerfield Elementary first graders were bursting with joy during the week before winter break. The classroom danced with energy as smiles grew bigger and brighter. Parent volunteers who came to help made their Christmas celebration even more special. Students decorated edible Christmas trees using sugar cones, frosting and colorful candies and created festive holiday crafts to take home. The sweet smell of sugar and peppermint filled the room along with chatter and giggles. With frosting-covered fingers, sticky smiles and sparkling decorations everywhere, it was messy, sweet and full of Christmas cheer!



★☆☆ VETERANS VISIT ★☆☆ MARCY ELEMENTARY

On November 10, students at Marcy Elementary had the privilege of hosting several veterans from their families for a special learning experience ahead of Veterans Day.

Marcy Elementary was honored to welcome SP4 Richard Davis of the United States Army, Senior Airman Jamie Popiel of the Air National Guard, Medical Specialist 6 Paul Rayno of the United States Army, Staff Sergeant Darrell Stovall of the United States Air Force and an E6 Medical in the United States Army, Staff Sergeant Tom Rothdiener of the United States Air Force and Senior Master Sergeant Donald Rothdiener of the United States Air Force.

During the event, veterans spoke about what it means to serve, shared stories from their time in the military and even brought photos and memorabilia to help students better understand their experiences. Their firsthand accounts helped students build meaningful, personal connections to the real people behind the uniforms and better appreciate the courage, commitment and sacrifice shown by those who have served.

The visit was a powerful way to honor Veterans Day and provided students with an invaluable opportunity to hear directly from those who have served our country. It was a memorable and impactful experience for all.



DEERFIELD FIFTH GRADERS HONOR VETERANS

On November 10, fifth graders at Deerfield Elementary School spent time honoring veterans from around the country. They spoke via Zoom with four veterans: Master Sergeant Mark Jampetti (Ms. Herthum's dad), Chief Master Sergeant James Stadler, Major Edwin "Banzai" Byrnes and Gunnery Sergeant Ray Byrnes.

During the Zoom call, the students shared messages of gratitude with the veterans and spent time asking questions and listening to the stories, experiences and words of wisdom from the veterans who dialed in from North Carolina, Florida and Texas.

The students and staff at Deerfield are grateful for the decades of service these men have given our country.

- Master Sergeant Mark Jampetti: Retired, 20 years of service, United States Air Force
- Chief Master Sergeant James Stadler: Retired, 29 years of service, United States Air Force
- Major Edwin "Banzai" Byrnes: Retired, 24 years of service, United States Air Force
- Gunnery Sergeant Ray Byrnes: Retired, 20 years of service, United States Marine Corps

The veterans spoke to the students about the events that inspired them to join the services, what motivated them through challenging times and the pros and cons of military life.

When asked about advice they have for the youth of America, Major Byrnes stated, "Every problem has a solution. Don't give up. Rely on those around you and use your resources to help you come to a solution."

Chief Master Sergeant Stadler added, "Find something you're passionate about. It isn't about money or status. Life is about doing the things that are rewarding to you."

The students also asked the men what skills they learned in the service that they still use today. Chief Master Sergeant Stadler answered, "Communication. Since I joined the Air Force at the age of 18, I have had to speak in front of groups of people. Working in the Air Force gave me the opportunity to work on my communication skills, which allowed me to speak to groups of people while working in the Pentagon and even teach high school students for many years."

The students were also excited to learn about the many locations around the world these veterans have been stationed, including Vietnam, Afghanistan, Philippines, Korea, Brazil, Chile, Hawaii and several US states.

After the Zoom call, students expressed admiration for the veterans and their families and appreciation for the sacrifices they have made. Many agreed this was an experience they will always remember and valued the opportunity to make real-life connections with veterans from around the country.



DEERFIELD AND HART'S HILL ELEMENTARY STUDENTS TAKE OVER COLGATE'S KIDS DAY



On January 14, Colgate University's Cotterell Court buzzed with excitement as dozens of local elementary students flocked to campus for a special Kids Day event, centered on the Colgate University women's basketball game against Loyola.

For many of these young fans — some visiting a college campus for the first time — the day was a mix of community celebration, school spirit and unforgettable live sports action. Organized by Colgate Athletics, the Kids Day offered students from nearby schools the chance to watch a Division I basketball game and experience first-hand what it's like to be part of a collegiate basketball crowd.

A Fun, Engaging Experience Off the Court

Although the centerpiece of the day was the basketball game, students were treated to a variety of pre-game activities designed to bring them into the collegiate sports experience. Bright banners, school chants and Raiders gear filled the stands as children met players, collected team souvenirs and participated in spirited chants alongside their classmates. Teachers and parents alike said the event was a wonderful opportunity to foster enthusiasm for athletics and community involvement among young students. Kids Day events like this help bridge the gap between local schools and university life, giving children a sense of connection to higher education and competitive sports.

The Game: Raiders vs. Greyhounds

Once the game tipped off, Cotterell Court was alive with energy. Colgate's women's basketball team battled hard against the visiting Loyola Greyhounds, keeping fans on the edge of their seats with a competitive matchup. The Raiders overcame an early deficit and closed the final moments within reach, ultimately falling in a tightly contested game, 49-47.

Despite the outcome, students cheered every play — from three-pointers to defensive stops — and soaked up the atmosphere of a real college basketball contest. Many students said this was one of the most exciting parts of their winter, especially seeing varsity athletes compete live.

Impact Beyond the Scoreboard

The significance of events like Kids Day goes far beyond the final score. For many young attendees, it marked their first introduction to women's collegiate athletics and a unique chance to see role models in action. College athletes often become powerful figures for youth — especially young girls — to look up to, inspiring them to stay active, pursue their goals and perhaps even dream about playing sports in college themselves.

Events that welcome children and families to watch and participate in college athletics foster community pride and create lasting memories for students who may one day return to campus as college students themselves. With its welcoming environment and engaging activities, Colgate's Kids Day offered just that — a day to celebrate sport, community and the joy of being part of a team.



WESTMORELAND ROAD SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE

Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a nonprofit organization that builds beds for children in need. Westmoreland Road Elementary staff and their families participated in the final Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed build of 2025. Together, they built 34 beds in two hours. We are grateful for the hands and hearts that made this possible.

SANTA BRINGS STORYTIME MAGIC *Hart's Hill Elementary*

On December 6, Hart's Hill Elementary School hosted its annual Stories with Santa event, spreading holiday cheer throughout the school community. Students and their families enjoyed a special visit with Mr. and Mrs. Claus, who read festive stories to groups of grades kindergarten through second and third through fifth students.

After story time, families created lasting memories by taking photos with Mr. and Mrs. Claus. Students then joined in a variety of holiday-themed activities — crafts, ornament making and cookie decorating — all while enjoying hot chocolate topped with marshmallows. The event also supported the local community through the Stuff the Bus toy drive, giving families the opportunity to donate new toys for children in need.

It was a fantastic turnout, and families enjoyed a joyful evening together. A heartfelt thank you goes out to our dedicated fifth-grade teachers for planning the event, the fifth-grade students for assisting with activities, the Hart's Hill PTO for sponsoring and providing many of the decorations and all teachers and staff who volunteered their time to make the night truly magical.



HERKIMER HUMANE SOCIETY VISITS MARCY ELEMENTARY

On December 16, individuals from the Herkimer Humane Society paid a special visit to the kindergarten classrooms at Marcy Elementary School.

Students were delighted to welcome Herkimer Humane Society Board Member Ed View and his two-year-old border collie, Lucy. During the visit, Mr. View taught students about the important role humane societies play in caring for dogs and cats in need of shelter and loving homes. Lucy also impressed students by showing off a few special tricks!

In preparation for the visit, kindergarten students and their families spent the month prior collecting donations for the Herkimer Humane Society. Together, the grade level gathered more than 200 items to support the shelter. This heartwarming project helped students learn the value of giving back and demonstrated how small acts of kindness can make a meaningful difference — especially during the holiday season.

The visit provided a valuable learning experience that supported the local community while teaching students the importance of compassion, teamwork and caring for others.





On December 8, the Whitesboro Music Department proudly presented the Marcy Elementary Holiday Concert at the high school auditorium. The performance featured the musical talents of the fifth grade orchestra, fifth grade band and the combined fourth and fifth grade chorus. Family, friends and classmates enjoyed the festive cheer as the concert delivered a joyful mix of beloved holiday classics and fresh, secular tunes.

Fifth Grade Orchestra (directed by Mrs. Charity Dreier, accompanied by Mrs. Jane Beck) performed:

- o "Dreidel" (Traditional, arr. Dreier)
- o "Bile Em' Cabbage Down" (arr. Essential Elements)
- o "First Christmas March" (arr. John O'Reilly)
- o "Royal Promenade" (Don Burbaker)

Fifth Grade Band (directed by Ms. Elissa Mae Murphy) performed:

- o "Musical Jump Start (1 & 2)" (William Owens)
- o "Dreydl Song" (Essential Elements for Band)
- o "Christmas Cheer" (Gerald Sebesky)
- o "Santa on the Housetop" (William Owens)

Fourth and Fifth Grade Chorus (directed by Mrs. Charity Dreier, accompanied by Ms. Jane Beck) performed:

- o "In December" (Teresa Jennings)
- o "Winter Wonderland" (arr. Andy Beck)
- o "Hashivenu" (arr. Sally K. Albrecht)
- o "Hot Chocolate!" (arr. Andy Beck)

The Marcy Elementary School administration and Whitesboro music department applaud the efforts of our student musicians. Their hard work, dedication and spirit of cooperation in presenting this performance is commendable.

A special thank you to all staff and administration who made the evening possible: the Marcy Elementary administrative professionals, faculty, custodial team, bus drivers, Information and Instructional Technology Department staff, Music Department staff, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Bellair, Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Accountability Mr. Dave Russo, the Whitesboro Board of Education and the Music Boosters. Thank you, especially to all parents/guardians, for your continuous encouragement of our young musicians!



A MAGICAL BREAKFAST WITH SANTA AT MARCY ELEMENTARY

On December 6, the Marcy Elementary PTO hosted its annual Breakfast with Santa, welcoming more than 380 guests for a festive morning of holiday fun. Santa greeted families throughout the event sharing smiles, conversation and photo opportunities with many excited children.

Students and their families enjoyed a variety of activities, including making reindeer food and Grinch dust, creating ornaments and getting their faces painted. Guests also visited the Book Fair and spent time dancing and playing games in the gymnasium.

The Marcy Elementary PTO extends its gratitude to everyone who helped make the event such a joyful success, including Marcy Elementary staff members, parent and guardian volunteers and the National Junior Honor Society students who generously donated their time. A special thank you to Santa for taking time out of his busy season to join the celebration!





On December 9, the Whitesboro Music Department proudly presented the Hart's Hill Elementary Holiday Concert at the middle school auditorium. The performance displayed the musical talents of the fifth grade orchestra, fifth grade band and the combined fourth and fifth grade chorus. Family, friends and classmates enjoyed a joyful mix of beloved holiday classics and fresh secular tunes, filling the auditorium with festive cheer!

Fifth Grade Orchestra (directed by Mrs. Lauralee Driscoll, accompanied by Mrs. Jessica Decker) performed:

- o "Dreidel Song" (Traditional)
- o "Christmas Sampler" (arr. Mark Williams)
- o "A Jazzy Jingle" (Trad., arr. Paul Cook)

Fifth Grade Band (directed by Ms. Elissa May Murphy) performed:

- o "Musical Jump Start" (arr. William Owens)
- o "Christmas Cheer" (Gerald Sebesky)
- o "Dreydl Song" (Essential Elements (#39))
- o "Santa on the Housetop" (arr. William Owens)

Fourth and Fifth Grade Chorus (directed by Mrs. Lauralee Driscoll, accompanied by Mrs. Jessica Decker) performed:

- o "Jazzy Saint Nick" (arr. Russell Robinson)
- o "I See a Star" (Greg Gilpin)
- o "Frosty Hand Jive" (arr. Jill Gallina)

Congratulations to our talented student musicians on an excellent performance!

A special thank you to all staff and administration who made the evening possible, including Principal Mr. Luke Manolescu, School Secretary Mrs. Karen Farr, Hart's Hill Elementary teachers and staff, custodial staff, music department staff, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Bellair, Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Accountability Mr. Dave Russo, the Whitesboro Board of Education and the Music Boosters. Thank you, especially to all parents/guardians, for your continuous encouragement of our young musicians!



HART'S HILL ELEMENTARY VETERANS DAY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT CEREMONY



On November 10, Hart's Hill Elementary proudly honored veterans within our school community during a special Veterans Day Acknowledgement Ceremony. Parents, guardians, staff members and relatives who have served in the military were recognized for their dedication and service.

As part of the celebration, each veteran walked the hallways alongside their child or family member. As they made their way through the building, a brief summary of their military service was shared over the loudspeaker. Students lined the hallways waving mini American flags, and patriotic music filled the school — creating a heartfelt tribute to those who served.

Hart's Hill is deeply grateful for the service and sacrifice of all veterans and for the opportunity to honor them as a school community. We thank you for your service!

Acknowledgement Ceremony Participants:

Kindergarten

- Jackson Engle, accompanied by their father Andrew Engle (U.S. Army)
- Mila Nagurney, accompanied by their father Matthew Nagurney (U.S. Navy)
- Fiona Rose, accompanied by their father Chad Rose (U.S. Army)
- Auston Starczewski, accompanied by their father Andrew Starczewski (U.S. Army)

Grade 1

- Jason Constantine, accompanied by their father Ed Constantine (U.S. Marines)
- Jordyn Johnson, accompanied by their father Joseph Johnson (U.S. Air Force)
- Lily Tooke, accompanied by their father Chad Tooke (U.S. Army)

Grade 3

- Joelle Johnson, accompanied by their father Joseph Johnson (U.S. Air Force)

Grade 4

- Evan Park, accompanied by their stepfather William Lavier (U.S. Army)

Grade 5

- Ella Rose Beaton, accompanied by their grandfather
- Nora Curley, accompanied by their father John Curley (U.S. Navy)

Staff

- School Patrol Officer Clay Bramhall (U.S. Marines)
- BOE Member Steven Farr (U.S. Air Force)
- Teacher's Aide Jessica Griffith (U.S. Marines)
- Assistant Superintendent Joe Muller (U.S. Air Force)



Westmoreland Road Hosts Bingo Night

On January 30, students at Westmoreland Road Elementary enjoyed a fun-filled evening of bingo alongside their families in the school cafeteria. The event brought smiles, laughter and excitement as the school community gathered for a night of friendly competition and family fun.

The energy in the room was contagious as Westmoreland Road Elementary Principal Timothy Johnston called out the bingo numbers, with students listening closely and eagerly marking their cards. Cheers filled the cafeteria as winners enthusiastically shouted "Bingo!" and selected prizes from a wide assortment of kid-friendly items.

A special thank you to everyone who helped make the evening such a success, including Principal Timothy Johnston for serving as the bingo caller, the high school student volunteers who assisted throughout the event and the Westmoreland Road Elementary PTO for organizing and hosting this enjoyable night for our school community.



WEST. ROAD SHOWS ITS *Holiday Spirit*

Westmoreland Road Elementary staff, students and families have been embracing the holiday season through acts of service and community involvement.

To kick off the season, the school hosted a highly successful food drive. Hundreds of non-perishable items were collected to support local food banks and assist families in need, reflecting the school community's strong commitment to helping others.

Later in the season, many staff members wrapped up Thanksgiving break by decorating an impressive float and joining the annual Village of Whitesboro Holiday Parade. Their efforts brought festive cheer to the event and showcased the school's pride and spirit.

It was great to see staff, students and families spend time together, support meaningful causes and celebrate the season.





Westmoreland Road Winter Concert

On December 16, the Whitesboro Music Department proudly presented the annual Westmoreland Road Elementary Winter Concert at the middle school auditorium. The performance displayed the musical talents of the fifth grade orchestra, fifth grade band and combined fourth and fifth grade chorus. Family, friends and classmates enjoyed a joyful mix of beloved holiday classics and fresh secular tunes, filling the auditorium with festive cheer!

Fifth Grade Orchestra (directed by Mrs. Margaret Tallman, accompanied by Mrs. Jessica Decker) performed:

- o "Dreidel" (arr. Essential Elements)
- o "Matthew's March" (arr. Essential Elements)
- o "Good King Wenceslas" (arr. John O'Reilly)
- o "A Jazzy Jingle" (arr. Paul Cook)
- o "A String Rock" (Tim Kansler)

Fifth Grade Band (directed by Ms. Elissa May Murphy) performed:

- o "Musical Jump Start" (William Owens)
 - No. 1: Tongue & Slur
 - No. 2: Counting Fun & Dynamic Run!
- o "My Dreydl" (arr. Essential Elements)
- o "Christmas Cheer" (Gerald Sebesky)
- o "Santa on the Housetop" (William Owens)

Fourth and Fifth Grade Chorus (directed by Mrs. Margaret Tallman, accompanied by Mrs. Jessica Decker) performed:

- o "Carol of the Bells" (M. Leontovich/P. Wilhousky; arr. S. Kupferschmid)
- o "Celebrating Hanukkah" (Brownsey/M. Lantz)
- o "Jingle Bell Dash" (J. Pierpoint; arr. L. Bailey)

Congratulations to all of our talented student musicians on a wonderful performance!

A special thank you to the staff and administration who made the evening possible, including Principal Timothy Johnston, school secretary Heather Scienza, Westmoreland Road Elementary teachers and staff, custodial staff, music department staff, Superintendent of Schools Brian Bellair, Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Accountability Dave Russo, the Whitesboro Board of Education and the Music Boosters. Thank you especially to all parents and guardians for your continued encouragement of our young musicians!



WHITESBORO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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65 Oriskany Boulevard, Whitesboro, New York 13492

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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 for the complete meeting schedule.

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- Receive discounted utilities and internet access
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- Become eligible for discounted school fees such as band instrument fees, textbook fees, athletic fees, technology fees, etc.

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