

N. A. Walbran Elementary School

April 2026 Building Newsletter

It has been a "sweet" year at N.A. Walbran Elementary School. I am so thankful for the wonderful students and staff that I have the pleasure of working with on a daily basis. On Tuesday, April 28th, we recognized our transportation staff for Bus Driver Appreciation Day. Student representatives from each bus provided drivers and monitors with a snack and thanked them for their dedication and service. During the week of May 4th-8th, we will celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week to recognize and honor staff for all their hard work and contributions to our school!

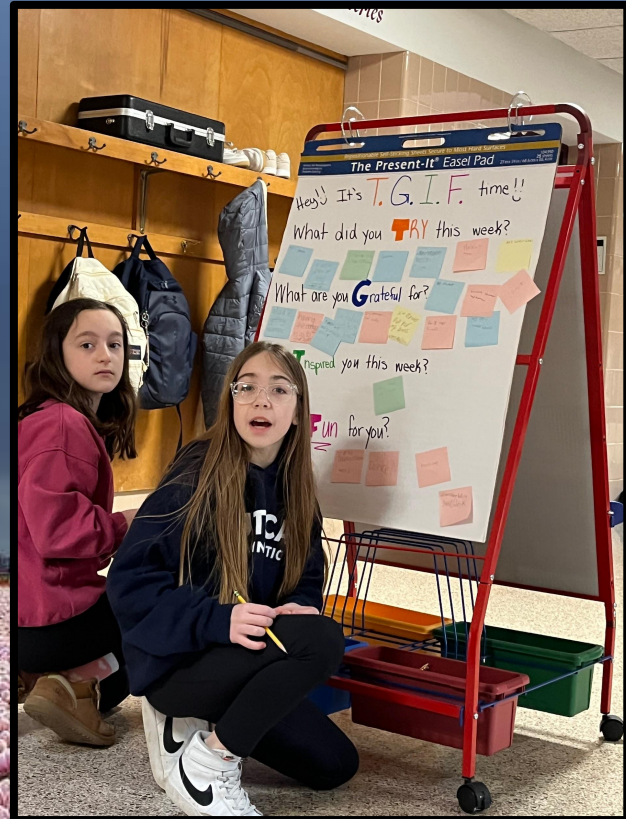
We had six students participate in the annual All-County Music Festival hosted by the Westmoreland Central School District on Saturday, April 25th. Chloe Buehner and Olivia Tuttle were part of the chorus. Candyce Dewey, Kiley Dousharm, Caiden Schneider, and Teghan Schneider participated in the band. Mr. Davis, our elementary music teacher, played a key role in supporting the chorus at the concert. Congratulations to our music department for proudly representing our school and community at this outstanding event that puts music excellence on display!

The 2 Miles of Smiles Community Event was a great success! Our staff welcomed families and the community back to the elementary track on Thursday, April 23rd. (See article on pages 4-5.) Approximately 130 students and 20 staff participated in this event! Students were able to stop off at challenge stations throughout their laps on the track and earned stamps to go along with a Candyland theme once they completed the challenge!

Sincerely,

Mr. Meiss

N. A. Walbran Principal

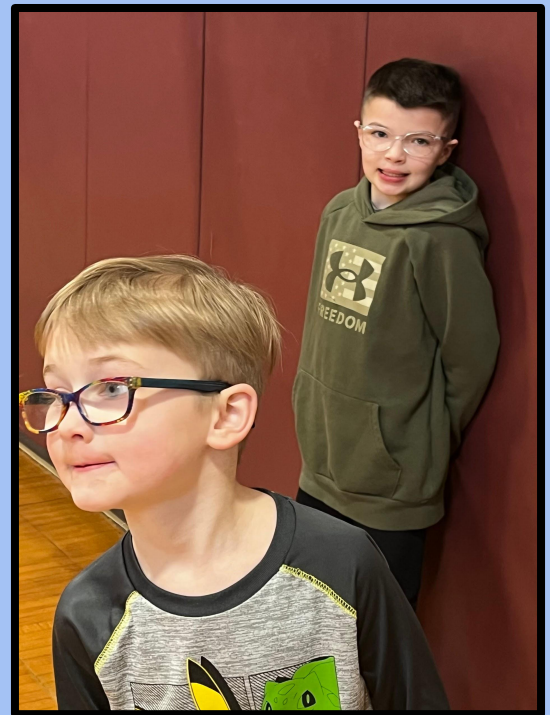


March Mentoring Program

By Isaac Baker and Dmitri Boyko



The March mentoring program was on Thursday, March 26th and was Easter themed. The first through sixth grade participants started with snacks, such as Capri Suns, Gatorade, Cheese-Its, pretzels, Twinkies, cupcakes, water, Pringles, and Fruit by the Foot. Then, they waited for everyone to finish eating. Next, they got ready for the scavenger hunt and the Easter egg hunt that took place in the gym.





The participants did an Easter egg hunt. In the gym, the participants were hiding eggs and switching places with other teams to find where the eggs were hidden. Also you could only collect the eggs that are the color of your hoop. Then, they went to find all of the eight eggs the other team hid. There were a few people on each team and there were six teams. While all that was happening, there were teachers such as Mrs. Commisso, Mr. Wright, Ms. Zarnoch-Riley, and many more were walking around with and cheering on the participants. When the participants were doing the Easter egg hunt, they went with a few teachers to multiple different rooms and found one egg in each room. All the people had fun at the March mentoring program.

Two Miles of Smiles Event

By Caidan Schneider

The Two Miles of Smiles event was held 5:30-7:00 on Thursday, April 23, 2026. This event had many stations and at each station, students completed an activity to earn a stamp on their card.

At Peppermint Forest, you had to play rock, paper, scissors. There was also Cupcake Cottage, where there was bottle flipping. For Lollipop Lane, you had to roll a die until it landed on purple. For Gumdrop Mountain, you flipped a coin. There was also Chocolate River, where you had to toss a bean bag and clap three times and catch it.





Another activity was Candy Castle, where you had to dance for fifteen seconds. Then there was Ice Cream Pond, where you had to take a silly photo. Lastly, there was Candy Canyon where you had to guess how many pieces of candy were in a jar.

Kids of all ages came to this event with their parents. The goal was to walk or run eight laps around the track and each lap you went to one station. When you were all done you put your slip into one of the three buckets labeled, Like It, Love It, or Gotta Have It.

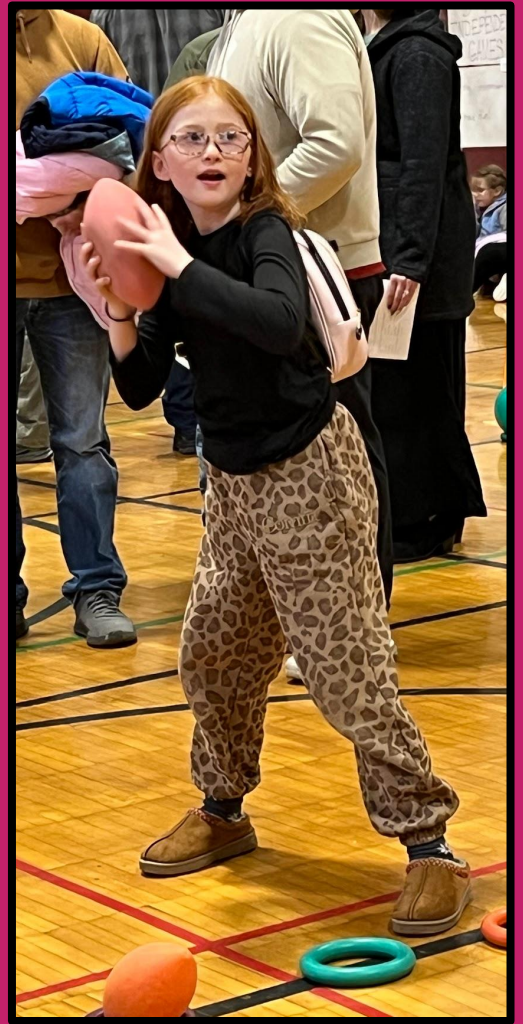


PARP Finale

By Caidan Schneider &
Olivia Tuttle

The PARP finale took place on April 1st from six to seven o'clock in the evening. This event took place at the elementary school.

There were stations that everyone could participate in at the gym and cafeteria. In the cafeteria there were two things to do. The first was to find the clown, and the second was to play the matching game with the teachers. When you were finished you could also do face paintings, board games, and coloring magnets.





There were a lot of stations in the gym, including Plinko, bowling, blindfolded basketball, and more! Overall, everyone had a good time and played fairly. Thank you to all of the teachers that helped for this event, and all of the families who encouraged their kids to read and support PARP! We're very appreciative of what you did!



April Student of the Month:
Avery Mikoleski
By Elise Knight



April Skyhawk of the Month:
Mrs. Kraeger
By Asteria Gotham



April's student of the month is Pre-K student Avery Mikoleski! Avery is a very polite student, and her absolute favorite subject is math. She enjoys the specials Physical Education (PE) and Music class. Avery is very excited to be the student of the month, and when asked about how she feels, she said she feels good! Avery's favorite animals are dogs and cats (I see why she couldn't pick just one!). Her favorite season of the year is winter, of course, since her birthday is around that time! Lastly, she loves the colors red and white. Avery is a joy to be around and is so sweet. Congratulations, Avery, on being chosen as April's Student of the Month! Keep up the amazing work.

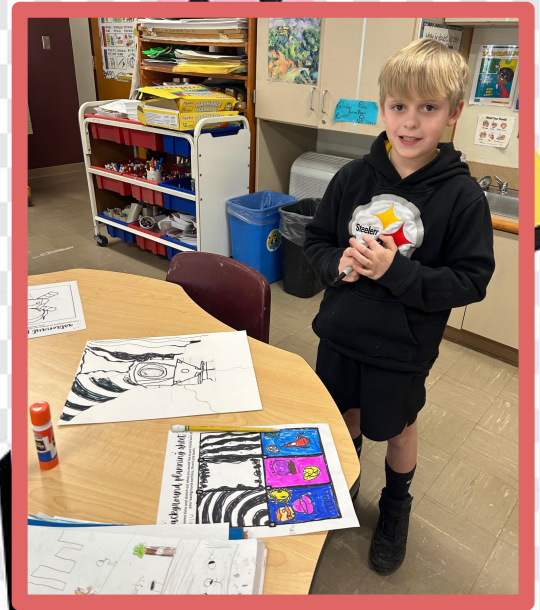
For April, the Skyhawk of the Month was Mrs. Kraeger! Mrs. Kraeger's job is a Kindergarten teacher who aspired to teach because she loves how excited the students get when they learn new things! Turns out, the thing they get the most excited for is learning about mathematics, which is also her favorite thing to do with her students!

Her favorite memory while working at N.A Walbran occurred at one of our PARP finales. She was out on the track with the Green Machine racer bikes! She also loves the Spring each year because her class learns about plants and do their own planting in the classroom.

If she could take her students anywhere in the world for a field trip, she would take them to Disney to watch some shows and meet the characters. A secret talent she has that her students don't know is that she loves to draw and build things, and she also enjoys reading and doing 1,000 piece puzzles! Her favorite book is *My Father's Dragon*, and lastly, she has a pet fish named Rainbow Sparkles!

Special Areas Celebrate the 90s

By Chloe Buehner & Mikenzie Wishart



During the month of March, the special area teachers had a week where they did different 90s themed activities for their fourth grade classes.

In music class, Mr. Davis had the fourth graders pick a popular 90s song and play the drum part along with the song. The fourth graders chose "Thunderstruck," by AC/DC. Along with playing the drum part, a small group of students led the rest of class knowing when to say the "thunder" part.

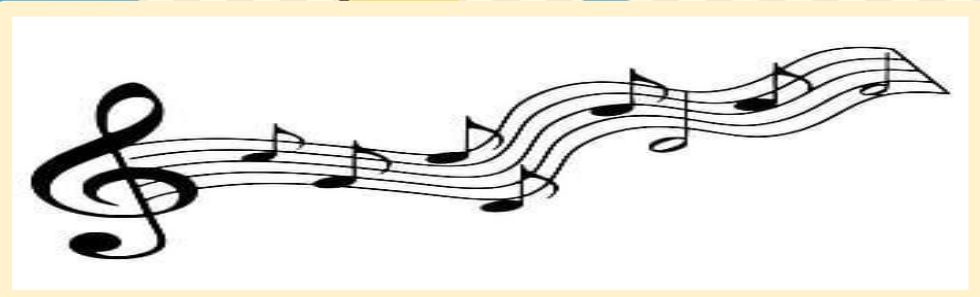




In art class, Ms. Brosemer had fourth grade classes look at some art by 90s artist Lisa Frank. After the students analyzed some of her pieces, they created their own 90s spacy astronaut art filled with vibrant colors and patterns.

In PE class, Mrs. Brown and Mr. Enos taught the fourth graders two popular 90s dances, which were the “Macarena” and the “Cotton-Eyed Joe.” For their warm-up at the beginning of class, they did a freeze dance that was based on 90s dance moves.

All the special area teachers and fourth grade students enjoyed bringing it back to the 90s.



PARP Teacher Challenge

By Kiley Dousharm & Chloe Buehner



On April 17, eleven teachers gathered outside on the track to participate in the 2026 PARP teacher challenge! On the track, there were 8 challenges for them to complete. First, the teachers got into groups, five on one side of the track, and six on the other side!

The amazing teachers that were willing to participate were Mr. Davis, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. DeFabio, Mrs. Kraeger, Mrs. Gray, Ms. Ricci, Ms. Koenig, Ms. Bell, Ms. Zarnoch-Riley, Mrs. Amodio, and Nurse Britt. Mr. Davis was the snail, Mrs. Brown the duck, Mrs. DeFabio the baby girl, Mrs. Kraeger the Chicken, Mrs. Gray the Unicorn, Ms. Ricci was Oogie Boogie, Ms. Koenig and Ms. Bell were, the cows, Ms. Zarnoch-Riley, the sumo wrestler, Mrs. Amodio the flamingo, and Nurse Britt the caterpillar!

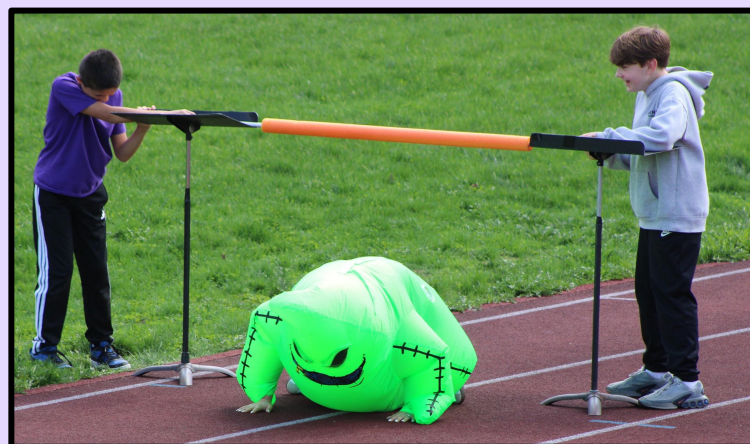
For the first challenge, the teachers had to go under a pool noodle, which was Nurse Britt's favorite challenge. The second challenge was the hula hoop station, where the teachers had to pull the hula hoops over their costumes. The hula hoop station was Mrs. Gray's favorite station! The third challenge was the basketball station, and for this station, the teachers had to throw a ball through a hoop. The fourth challenge was kickball, where the teachers had to kick a ball into a goal, which was Mrs. Kraeger's favorite. After they reached the kickball station, they had to run back around the track and repeat the challenges in reverse order, then get to the beginning, and do the final challenge. The final challenge to conclude the challenge was where the teachers had to pop a balloon to stop their timer. This was Ms. Ricci, Mrs. DeFabio, and Ms. Zarnoch-Riley's favorites.





According to Mrs. DeFabio, "I love how Nurse Britt decided, as the caterpillar, to forgo the track and concentrate on the stations only. She knew she needed an advantage!" She also said, "I won't do this again-I'm too old!" Mrs. Kraeger stated that, "It was hot!!!!" Ms. Ricci says, "I will be picking a different costume next year that doesn't cover my face and arms. Once I have that, I would like a rematch!!" According to Mrs. Gray, "My battery pack fell twice and I deflated. I had to stop and pick up the battery pack to inflate." Ms. Zarnoch-Riley said, "I don't know how Mrs. Kraeger was able to do what she did when she was two feet taller than usual and couldn't really see!" According to Nurse Britt, "Mr. Davis is soooo fast!" and, "My feet were basically tied together in that costume which made it hard to run."

The students all enjoyed watching the teachers, and the teachers hopefully also enjoyed it. Thank you to all the participating teachers, for entertaining our students and other faculty members!



Pre-K and Third Grade Buddies

By Salvatore Cardarelli

The third graders helped the Pre-K students with a fun activity which was for St. Patrick's Day. For this activity, they cut out five pieces of gold and put them on a pot of gold. They then decorated it how they wanted to. There were some Pre-K students with one third grader and a few Pre-K students with two third graders. They also could have a colorful rainbow to put on top of their pot of gold. They were partnered together at the start of the year. Both grades had a great time and everyone had a smile when they left!

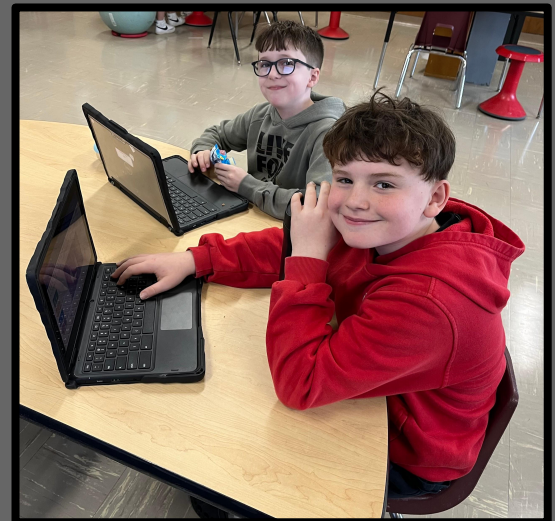
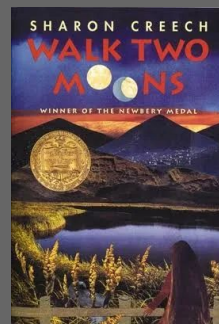


Grade 5 Walk Two Moons Project

By Nash Johnston & Blake Roberts

During WIN time, two groups of graders completed projects related to a book called Walk Two Moons over the past few months. They created artwork, wrote poems, drew what they thought their soul would look like, and constructed a family tree, among other choices for projects. What is Walk Two Moons? Walk Two Moons is a realistic fiction book by author Sharon Creech. Ms. Zarnoch-Riley worked with ten 5th graders at WIN (what I need) time.

They completed these projects after reading this book because it is Ms. Zarnoch-Riley's favorite chapter book that she wanted to share with everyone. It's her favorite chapter book because it tells the stories of different friends who go through similar challenging situations in their personal lives and they handle these situations very differently. At the end of their time together, they will present their projects to one another and some of the projects are also on display in the hallway for everyone to see. The students liked Creech's book so much that they even signed out other books by her in the school library, as well as Ms. Zarnoch-Riley's classroom library! If you're looking for a great book for your summer reading, look for Walk Two Moons at your local library or bookstore. You won't be sorry!

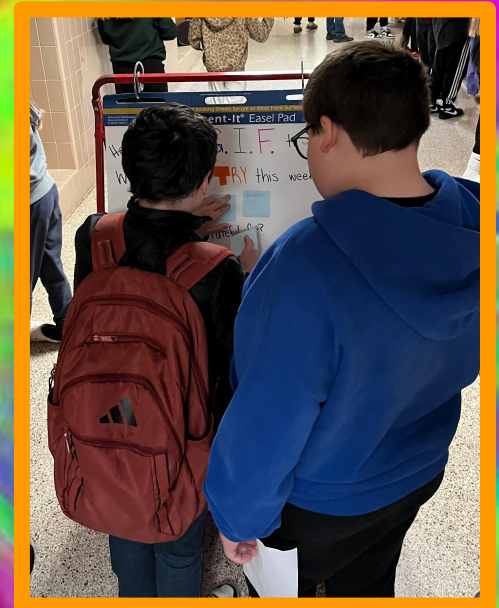
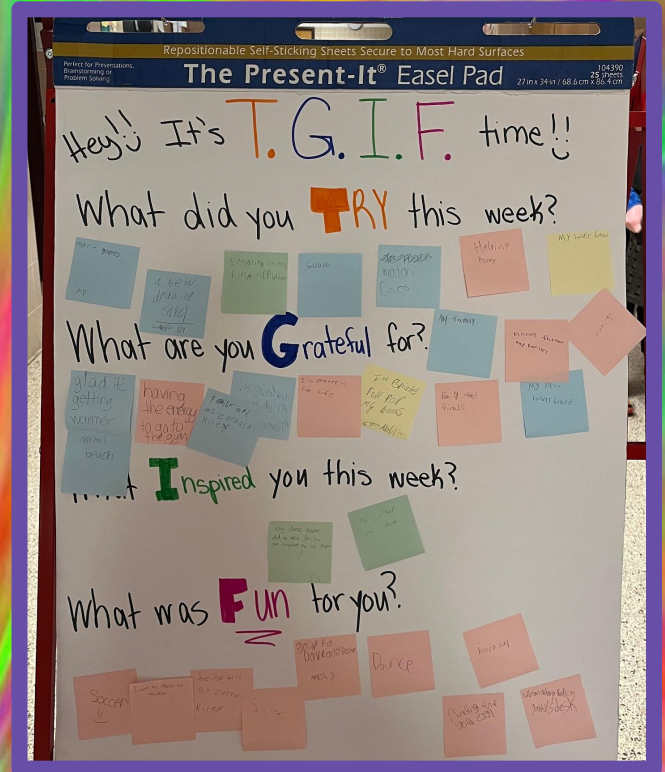


'Don't judge a man until you walk two moons in his moccasins.'

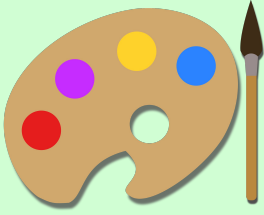
TGIF Board

By Kiley Dousharm

Starting in late winter, Ms. Zarnoch-Riley invited the fourth through sixth graders to reflect on their week. In the hallway, there is a T.G.I.F. board. TGIF originally means "thank god it's Friday." The letters in the TGIF board stand for the words **Try**, **Grateful**, **Inspired**, and **Fun**. Students ask themselves the questions: What did I **TRY** this week? What am I **GRATEFUL** for? What **INSPIRED** me? What was **FUN** about this week? There are sticky notes for the students, on which they would write down one thing that fits them, and place it in the correct group. Many students participated, and enjoyed it!



Upcoming Events By Salvatore Cardarelli



May 11: Budget Hearing and Meet the Candidates, 5:30pm. Jr./Sr. High school auditorium

May 19: Budget Vote and Board of Education Election, 12:00-8:00pm

May 19: District Art/Technology Show, 5:00-7:00pm

May 19: Elementary Spring Concert, 7:00pm Jr./Sr. High school auditorium

May 25: Memorial Day (No school)



N. A. Walbran Building Newsletter: Meet the Team



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