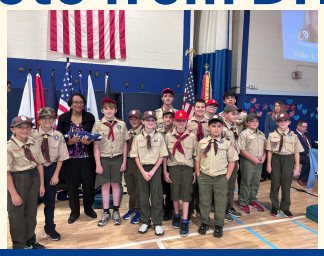
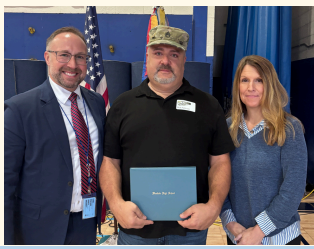
THE WILDCAT WEEKLY

A Note from Dr. G

Volume 6 Issue 10







Superintendent's Corner

For the 11th year, Columbus Elementary honored local veterans with Take a Vet to School Day, an initiative created by the History Channel. More than 50 veterans from all five branches of the armed services joined us, including parents, grandparents, uncles, neighbors, and staff members. Christina DeBellis and Valentina Avellino both had their grandfathers here! The day began with a PTA-sponsored breakfast where students interviewed veterans, followed by classroom visits filled with stories, photographs, maps, and uniforms.

CES Principal Kevin Hanlon welcomed students, families, veterans, Board of Education members, and district staff to the ceremony. Cub Scouts Hawthorne Pack 1 and Scouting America Troop 1 presented the colors, the Columbus Troubadours sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," and the Columbus Honor Band performed "Armed Forces Medley." Through the annual Penny Wars, the student council raised nearly $1,600 for My Brother Vinny, a nonprofit that helps formerly homeless veterans. The donation was made in memory of Duke Searles, a veteran and dear friend of Columbus who passed away this year. As part of New York's Operation Recognition program, Principal Dan Brady prepared an honorary Westlake High School diploma for veteran Nicholas Pelliccio. The ceremony closed with the Remembrance Table, a symbolic setting with an empty chair that honors those who never came home.

Thank you to 5th grade teacher Christine Galbo, who organizes this day each year in honor of her father's service in Vietnam, and to master of ceremonies Sean Mayer. Most of all, thank you to our veterans for sharing their stories with our students.




At Take a Vet to School Day, Girl Scout Senior Mikaela Gerring unveiled her Gold Award project, "Remembering with Respect." Located by the flagpole outside Columbus Elementary, it includes a bench honoring veterans and a flag retirement drop box. During the ceremony, Mikaela spoke about what veterans mean to her and how they inspire future generations.

The Week Ahead

11/9 - Superintendent Search Meeting 7:30-9 PM, Westlake Library

11/10 - WMS/WHS Underclassmen Retakes; Early Dismissal/Emergency Drill, Westlake Campus, 2 PM, CES 2:40 PM, HES 2:45 PM

11/11 - Veterans Day Schools Closed

11/12 - WMS/WHS Report Cards, WMS Parent-Teacher Conf (2-hr delay), CES/HES/UPK Parent-Teacher Conf (11:15 AM Dismissal)

11/13 - Elem PTA Turkey Bingo

Noticing the Good

Hawthorne's youngest engineers have been busy designing, building, and solving problems in the STEM Lab this fall. Second graders have been exploring LEGO BricQ kits, following directions, experimenting, and bringing their own ideas to life. Along the way, they are strengthening spatial reasoning, fine motor skills, and math connections while learning to collaborate and persevere. Kindergarten and first grade students are working through a Fairytale STEM unit, reading stories like The Three Little Pigs and Jack and the Beanstalk, then designing solutions to problems inspired by each tale.

For Halloween, the units took a festive detour. Second graders tackled a challenge inspired by Creepy Carrots, first graders learned about bats and built bat caves, and kindergartners read Five Little Pumpkins and designed gates to keep their pumpkins in place.

We are proud of the curious thinking, imaginative ideas, and creative designs our young engineers continue to share!






In Awe of the Paw – Choir Star!

Westlake will have a voice on the national stage this March. Regina Sica has been accepted into the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) National Honor Choir, which comes together in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Earning a spot among singers selected from across the country is a tremendous honor, and we could not be prouder to have Regina representing our Wildcats. Bravo, Regina!

