

BURGUNDY & GOLD

Issue #1 A Wyoming Valley West Middle School Newsies Publication *Fall 2023*



Bring Glee in 2023!

Written by: Principal Bond

Welcome back to our students, teachers, support staff, security officers and parents/guardians. The 2023-2024 school year presents us with the opportunity to continue our academic, social and emotional journey together. While our students age, brain development and bodies continue to grow it is essential to remember that all adults in the building are invaluable resources that may help our students on their journey with us. In relation, it is essential to note that we have new staff in the building who are eager to compliment our mission including Assistant Principal Mr. Christopher Gagaris, teachers Mr. Mark Senchak, Mr. Ryan Murphy, Mr. Aaron Littzi, Mrs. Kaitlyn Takacs, and speech therapists Ms. Morgan Gilhooley and Ms. Katherine Stonikinis. As we proceed throughout the year we may be inspired by our goals within our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system to continue growing

positively as we are Being Respectful, Being Responsible and Being Kind. Students and parents should be alert to our new PBIS initiative of using Classroom Dojo to award points to our students exhibiting behaviors consistent with our PBIS pillars. Furthermore, our Student Council has brought several new ideas to me, student-initiated, that will make our school more spirited. In closing, while our students and staff are working hard in providing positive, valuable and fun opportunities for our student body please be aware that we, Principal Bond, Assistant Principal Shook, Assistant Principal Gagaris and School Resource Officer Sosnoski appreciate our students efforts to reduce negative behaviors by taking advantage of the help and guidance we may offer you as you travel towards adulthood.



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WW MS Welcomes New Teachers

Written by: Justine Alapack

With the introduction of the new school year, several new teachers have joined the Wyoming Valley West School District. A few of them were interviewed and asked questions. These questions range from fun facts about themselves to their feelings about their move to Wyoming Valley West. Let's begin with the new science teacher.

The first teacher to be mentioned is Mrs. Takacs. She said that her favorite part of the school district was the students themselves and she felt at home and happy. Her favorite part of teaching is when students have a "lightbulb moment," or when the lesson they are learning finally resonates with them. Several fun facts about Mrs. Takacs were collected as well. Her favorite color is lilac. She enjoys cooking as a hobby and her favorite type of food is Asian

food. Unlike her current occupation, she had also explained that she used to aspire to be a veterinarian.

Mr. Littzi was also asked questions about himself and his opinion of our school. He said that his favorite subjects to teach are health and physical education. To him, this is not surprising because he had always loved sports as a child. He also claimed that the best part of teaching was having "the opportunity to positively impact the next generation." A few fun facts were collected from Mr. Littzi as well. His favorite color is blue and his favorite food is pizza, the latter being something he eats every Friday night. He also said that his preferred hobbies are spending time with his wife and three-year-old daughter and playing soccer.

The final teacher interviewed was Mr. Murphy. He said that his favorite part of Wyoming Valley West is the faculty. "Everyone has been warm, welcoming, and willing to help get me started at WWV," he wrote. His favorite moment with his students is also when they understand the concept being taught. His favorite topic to teach is inverse operations. As a child, he wanted to be a professional baseball player. He had not anticipated becoming a teacher. He sings and plays guitar, and his favorite food is steak.

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I would like to thank Mrs. Takacs, Mr. Littzi, and Mr. Murphy for taking the time to answer my questions. We all look forward to this new year with these three teachers who have just been introduced to our school district. It was fun getting to know and learn about them.



Welcome Mr. Gegaris

Written by: Amelia Nankivell

In September, we welcomed Mr. Gegaris to Wyoming Valley West Middle School. After interviewing Mr. Gegaris, I learned a few things about our new assistant principal. He made the decision to apply to work here at our school because he grew up in the area and thought he could really help the students. He likes the size of the school and the fact that there are many challenges for him to tackle daily.

Mr. Gegaris says that he enjoys working with the students at the school and he realizes they need support. Three words that Mr. Gegaris would use to describe his job are “inspiring, rewarding, and challenging.” He gives it his all, one day at a time, and tries to be active and physical. One quote he would use to describe his time here so far and his time in the future would be “Together, everyone achieves more”.

I believe that Mr. Gegaris has a voice that needs to be heard. He has a message for the kids at this school that I think every student should hear. He could make the school a better place for all students, and I believe that he is going to be an amazing addition to the Wyoming Valley West School District.

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Spartan Spirit Week

Written by: Noah Brzoska

Spartan Spirit Week took place October 16th – 20th. The Middle School kicked off the week with Mismatch Monday. Twin Tuesday saw many students matching outfits with one of their friends or teachers. Waikiki Wednesday featured some of the best Hawaiian-themed outfits. On Throwback Thursday, the 6th grade class dressed in colorful clothing of the 60s. The 7th graders brought back the tie-dye era of the 70s and the 8th graders sported the popular styles of the 80s. Finally, the week ended with Fan Friday where the entire school wore their best Spartan attire leading into the Homecoming Parade and game that evening.

Each day homeroom teachers would choose the top 3 students best supporting the theme of the day and those individuals would get a picture

and be judged to win a prize. During lunch members of the yearbook club would come down and take pictures of kids who were taking part in the Spirit Week themes.

Thankfully the bad weather held off for the big parade and the crowning of Mr. and Miss Sparta. Sadly, the Spartans ended the week with a loss, but a fun week was had by all.



Sixth Grade Transitions into the Middle School

Written by: Noah Brzoska

Since September, the sixth grade has had to adapt to a new school environment. I spoke to a few 6th grade students, and it seems that, so far, their school year is going well, but they also had several complaints. The 6th graders report a mix of teacher personalities – some they really enjoy and some not as much. Of course, that could be said for any grade level in any school. Reported

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as some of the bigger struggles the students have accomplished over the last few months include opening lockers and finding Mr. Shed's room.

Several students stated that they find that the stairwells and hallways are chaotic and loud because there are so many students in the Middle School. Also, they do not enjoy waiting outside in the morning, especially with the cold winter months approaching. Finally, one last thing the students find annoying is the metal detectors, but they understand that it is for their safety.

Hopefully, as the school year progresses, the 6th graders will become more familiar with the routine of the Middle School and overcome the struggles that they have experienced. I am sure they will have more struggles, but also many positive experiences by the end of the school year.



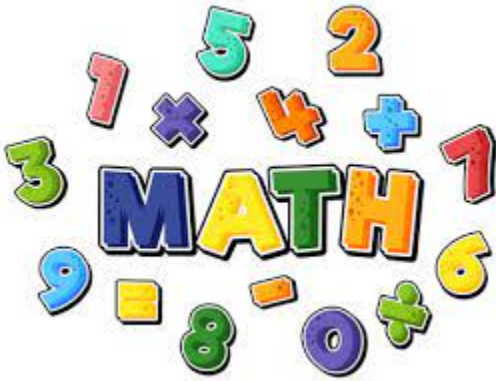
Music at Marywood

Written by: Maya Kaupp

On October 27th and 28th selected students from the 7th and 8th grade orchestra traveled to Marywood University to perform. Throughout the day the students practiced four songs to play for a concert the following day. The songs had a wide variation from “Remember Me” from the movie Coco, to “Sharks of Seville”, which is similar to the Jaws theme song. From my experience, it was fun. The conductor was entertaining and made it a very enjoyable experience for the invited musicians. All of the students from the different schools were friendly and accepting. Marywood College students walked around and helped with the beat, or if you were having trouble with a particular measure. This trip was a valuable learning experience for those who love music.

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Math Counts

Written by: Maya Kaupp

Math Counts is a club where you solve above-level math questions. If you love math, then you should absolutely join this club. You do not necessarily need to be great at math, you just need to enjoy math and take the test to join. Also, taking the test doesn't mean you're going to compete on stage. You're not expected to know the problems right away, so you can improve your abilities to be able to compete if you get a certain score on the initial test in February. You should consider joining! If interested, see Dr. Oliveira in Room 102.



Halloween Trunk or Treat

Written by: Samuel Favata

Kingston Borough held its annual Trunk or Treat on Sunday, October 28th. Despite the rainy day, the event was a huge success. Toddlers, teens, and adults showed up in creative costumes, such as Wednesday Addams, Paw Patrol characters, a Barbie and Ken duo, and the whole Sesame Street gang. There were several group costumes sighted in the long line of trick or treaters. Student Council members Samuel Favata, Alivia Jordan, Avery Thompson, Paige Serbel, Genevieve Zavada, Noah Brzoska, Liliana Vankuyk, Elizabeth Vanykuyk, Navaeh Vankirk, Navaeh Wells, Leona Shannon, Neneh Cham, and Jeremy Martinez spent the afternoon helping with the WVV Student Council sponsored Trunk. They distributed over 1600 candy bags at this event and the Plymouth Trunk or Treat held on Halloween night in the WVV High School parking lot.

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WWV MS Honors Veterans

Written by: Samuel Favata

WWV Middle School held an assembly on Thursday, November 9th to honor local veterans. The walls of the auditorium were a display of patriotism with all of the posters created by the 8th grade social studies classes. The musical portion of the assembly consisted of the Spartan Singers, the 8th grade band, and the orchestra combined. This was the first year the band and orchestra collaborated to play a song together, and they did a fantastic job. Liam Bealla played the song "Taps" on the stage and wowed the

audience with his amazing trumpet performance. Thank you to Mr. Coates, Mrs. Schneider, and Mrs. Hall for directing these performances and to Mr. Whalen for planning the event.



WWV Jr. High Football: Game Changers

Written by: Aaliyah Taylor

WWV Jr. High Spartans Football Team is a group of talented and dedicated young players who never fail to impress on the field. With their strong teamwork and passion for the game, they have become a strong force with a win-lose ratio of 6-2! Whether it is scoring touchdowns or making tackles, our Spartans give it their all in a sport they truly love. It is inspiring to see their hard work pay off and to witness their growth throughout the season. Go Spartans!

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The Exciting World of School Field Hockey

Written by: Aaliyah Taylor

Field hockey is a thrilling sport that has been gaining popularity among students all over the country. This fast-paced game provides a great source of exercise and promotes teamwork. One of the most appealing aspects of school field hockey is its inclusiveness. Unlike some other sports that require specific physical attributes, field hockey welcomes players of all shapes, sizes, and abilities. Whether you are tall, short, fast, or strong, there is a position for everyone on the team.

I took a moment to ask our WVV Middle School team goalie, Elizabeth Vankuyk, some questions.

Q: What do you do before games to get yourself ready?

A: I listen to music.

Q: What was the overall school record this season for WVV MS?

A: 10 wins, 2 losses

Q: How long have you played the position of goalie?

A: 6 years total

Q: Wow! Was it challenging when you first started that position?

A: Of course!



Spectacular Spartan Soccer

Written by: Lauren Bealla

The 2023 Fall Soccer Season has come to a close! This year the boys' and girls' junior high soccer teams faced off against teams from Lake-Lehman, Dallas, Berwick, Wilkes-Barre Area, Hazleton, and Pittston Area. The boys ended the season with a record of 10-4, their final game being a win against the formerly undefeated Wilkes-Barre Area Wolf Pack. The girls' team ended the season with a record of 1-13, with a win

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against Hazleton. After their win, they celebrated by pieing their coaches in the face. Several members of the girls' team helped make soccer-related spartan pride posters for the school.

Although both teams had a lot of fun this season, the season was not without hard work. Home games and practices were held behind the State Street Elementary School. Practices were held every day after school for an hour and thirty minutes. The girls' team was coached by Harley Krause and Ava Carey. The boys' team was coached by Luke Ruseskas. The captains of the boys' team are Maksym Iracki, Brayden Clark, Benjamin Buonsante, and Kellan Krypel. The captains of the girls' team are Alyxandria Dick and Sophia Vassello. Both the captains and coaches helped bring the teams to where they are today.

As a player on the junior high girls' team, and this being my second year, I can say that this is the biggest highlight of my middle school years. I love the sport and I love my team. We have grown a lot over the span of the season. Ansa Mubasher, an eighth grader, stated "Although I will miss working with the seventh graders on the team, I am excited to reunite with last year's players who are now in high school."

A lot of hard work, fun, and dedication went into this year's season. It was definitely a season to remember!

