

The Parent Connection

Educators and Parents: Together We Can Make a Difference

P R E S I D E N T ' S P O D I U M



“Together we can achieve the extraordinary.”

Sean M. Spiller

Offering a helping hand is always special, but it seems even more so around the Holidays when we see so many giving in so many ways to those in need.

It has been great to see how many students and staff members have come forward to work hard to help others.

Already we have seen one of our media specialists organize around the *Follett Challenge*. After writing the initial essay, she filmed and created the video portion of the grant and followed it up by working throughout the community to build support. Her efforts secured \$10,000 in media items for our students who visit the media center.

We saw our students in our schools reach out to thank those who serve this great nation, while others conducted toy drives to provide a gift for so many children who are not as fortunate as others this time of year.

The Wayne Valley community, as well as the township as a whole, worked together to provide for a family in need. What a wonderful gift to be able to show that we all care and that there is support for each other even in the most difficult of times.

Most recently, our automotive department and our auto students worked to show the great accomplishments of the shop while also showing how much more could be done with an automotive grant... Once again, we saw success. A grant of \$10,000 was awarded to Wayne Schools to utilize for an upgrade to the auto shops.

As we continue through the year, our teachers and support staff look forward to partnering with the PTO, community groups, administration, and others to offer assistance when necessary, to push for even better opportunities for our students, and to keep our community strong.

Let's keep the Holiday spirit going throughout the year!

WV PEER LEADERS RUN FOOD AND TOY DRIVE

The Wayne Valley Peer Leaders held their annual Toy Drive this December to benefit the Paterson Fire Department's Toy Drive. Over 150 gifts were donated, making it one of the club's most successful drives to date. The Peer Leaders were pleased with the Wayne Valley community's sense of giving this holiday season. The Toy Drive began immediately after completing the annual Thanksgiving Food Drive, a joint campaign between the Wayne Valley Health Office and the Peer Leaders.

It was the mission of the Peer Leaders to make these two holiday drives their most successful ever since so many more people are in need this year than in years past.



George Washington Middle School Shows Its Talent

Students at George Washington Middle School decided to let their talents show this past November. The George Washington Talent Show took place on November 17. Parents seemed very pleased as their children showed off their great variety of skills and gifts in front of an enthusiastic crowd.

Kerrian Dorans-Palmieri, the advisor for this program, held practices for students who performed on stage and also taught the stage crew students how to use the equipment & create the set for the show. She was assisted by physical education teachers Liz Tible and Jen Haggerty, who led the adaptive class at practice, thereby allowing them to be part of the show.

A great time was had by all.



Wayne Education Association
Address: 551 Valley Road
Wayne, NJ 07470
Email: weawayne@verizon.net
Office: 973-694-2605
Fax: 973-694-2748
Web: www.weawayne.org

Sean M. Spiller, President
Kathleen Hanenberg, 1st Vice President
Eda Ferrante, 2nd Vice President
Greg Panas, Treasurer
Gail Lennox, Secretary
Sarah De Simone, WEA Office Mgr.

The Parent Connection
weanews@yahoo.com
www.weawayne.org

Dennis Carroll, Editor

Spotlight on Our Staff

Laura Healy - Media Specialist

I am a graduate of The College of St. Elizabeth where I completed my undergraduate work in Elementary Education, Fine Arts and Special Education. I then went on to obtain my master's degree at Kean University for School Library Media. I have been a teacher for a total of 11 years beginning in Clifton, NJ and then moving to Wayne. I began teaching in Wayne 7 years ago as a Special Education teacher and have currently been the Media Specialist at Randall Carter for the past 3 years.

I came across the Follett Challenge while searching for other various grants. The Follett Challenge was a program created by Chuck Follett CEO, to promote and reward school libraries for applying technology, content and creativity in ways to engage students and foster literacy. The contest consisted of an extensive essay portion along with a video component that was voted on by the public. Since I know we have a VERY supportive community here in Wayne, I promoted our video through newspapers, email, Facebook, Twitter and stood outside of local businesses to get the word out to vote. It worked!

We were the People's Choice Winners of \$10,000. The Follett Corporation flew us out to Minneapolis, Minnesota on an all expense paid trip. We were honored on October 27 in a ceremony at the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Conference. The students, parents and staff members have already created an enormous wish list that we will use to enhance our media center with books, eBooks, playaways and DVDs. This is truly a district wide win due to our Interlibrary Loan Program. Students and staff members in any school, within Wayne, are able to borrow the materials from Randall Carter's Media Center. I cannot thank our community, parents and staff members enough. Without the support from everyone this would not have been possible.



Preparing our children for a healthier tomorrow

Aftercare students from Pines Lake School recently completed the program "A Journey Through The Human Body" sponsored by the Wayne Alliance and run by school nurse Susan Barbara-Rizzo. Students explored how poisons, drugs, smoking and alcohol can harm our incredible human body. They learned about each of the body's organs and how to stay healthy. Through the use of art, games, and role play they learned how to make healthy and smart decisions and how to avoid dangerous and unhealthy situa-



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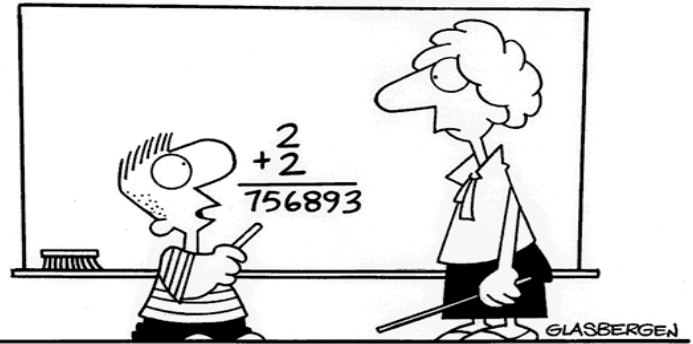
Saying Thanks to those that Serve our Nation

The second graders at APT completed a service project for the residents of the NJ Memorial Veterans Home in Paramus, NJ. They donated Halloween candy then wrapped it in patriotic



bags, along with letters of thanks. This project was a perfect way of honoring our brave men and women and also a perfect way of showing our gratitude for their service.

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"In an increasingly complex world, sometimes old questions require new answers."

"All Aboard!" the Express at James Fallon

The First Grade students at James Fallon kicked off the holiday season with celebrating the "Polar Express Day"! The children spent the whole day doing many different activities having to do with the holiday story. They even came to school dressed in their pajamas! Each student was also given a golden ticket which was stamped by the conductor (a.k.a. their teacher)!



The Wayne Valley Community Reaches Out

T'is the season to be giving. On December 10, the Wayne Valley High School Booster Club demonstrated the spirit of giving when they delivered gifts to the Voit family. The Voit children, already devastated by the floods in Wayne, recently suffered the loss of both parents, their father in June 2011 and their mother in November 2011. The children now live with their uncle in Wayne.



The Booster Club began raising money for the family on November 21. They sold poinsettia plants, T-shirts and collected donations. Money raised was used for funeral costs and to establish a scholarship fund for the three children. The Wayne Valley National Honor Society, the Student Council and the Peer leaders led a two-week long fundraiser to assist the Voit family.

Students and teachers gladly made donations in the form of money, gift cards and other items that the family would need in the near future. The group ran bake sales and took donations during lunch period in their effort to make a small difference during this difficult time. Over \$3,000 was collected by the three Wayne Valley organizations. The response from Wayne residents and neighboring communities was overwhelming! Altogether \$89,000 was raised!

As a surprise to the Voit family, Wayne residents gathered outside the uncle's home. The family, was shocked by the large gathering of Christmas carolers. Santa Claus, with a few faithful elves, distributed gifts from a bag full of toys donated by the community. Joining the festivities was Mayor Christopher Vergano and reality personality Melissa Gorga, from the Housewives of New Jersey. This was a moving experience for everyone present. Best wishes to the Voit family for a safe and happy New Year!