



W Y O M I S S I N G A R E A

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Inspiring Excellence, One Spartan at a Time!

Spirit Week at the Jr./Sr. High School



Spirit week is an annual highlight at the Jr./Sr. High School. Students and teachers come together in a fun, spirited, and competitive way. The week is celebrated with grade-specific hallway decorating to match the color of their grade and theme of their choice, along with themed dress days throughout the week. Students fostered school spirit through annual events including Knockout, Academic Challenge, Inferno, and Spirit Games. The seniors showed their talent with the annual “senior dance” and finished the week as the Spirit Week 2022 Champions! To conclude the week, students in grades 11 and 12 competed in the Powder Puff ultimate frisbee

game and everyone came together Sunday night and enjoyed dancing and snacks in the new gym, along with a great DJ for the Homecoming dance! We were also excited to celebrate our Homecoming Court during Spirit Week as well. Spirit week is always one to remember and is fun for all! Thank you to the Student Council for their work in planning the week of special events.



West Reading Elementary Center Hosts International Educators

Wyomissing Area School District is proud to partner with Albright College and Total Experience Learning. Students and teachers are exploring TEL this year, working to integrate authentic learning experiences into our classrooms. Albright College hosted national and international educators from five countries and four states ready to explore the ideas of TEL in early October, and these guests, along with local entrepreneurs, stakeholders, and community leaders, visited classrooms at WREC to see TEL in action. We are excited to continue collaborating, learning more about TEL, and engaging in valuable learning opportunities in our classrooms.



WREC's Annual Fifth-Grade Sleepover





Photo Credit: [Krista Moya Photography](#)

In early October, the West Reading Elementary Center held its annual fifth-grade sleepover. Organized by the Wyomissing Area PTA, fifth-grade students participated in a variety of activities from 7 PM to 7 AM. The night began with a group dance activity that then turned into a 3-station rotation: students switched between gym games, baking coffee cakes, and scrapbooking. In between each activity, students read a book of their choice for 10 minutes. By 11 PM, it was time for “lights out!” In the morning, students ate the coffee cake they baked the previous night before heading home. The chaperones were exceptional in helping make this event happen. We cannot thank the Wyomissing Area PTA enough for their hard work in continuing this tradition that brings the Spartans so much fun and happiness.

Science Field Trip to Wilkes University



A group of students in AP Environmental Science and AP Biology attended Wilkes University's Environmental Science Day. They toured the college campus, explored labs in the Cohen Science Center, and enjoyed a complimentary lunch with current students, faculty, and staff. The students also had the opportunity to participate in labs with instruction from the college professors. The first was called "Rivers, Flood, and Landslides—Oh My!" which examined the effects of bodies of water concerning erosion as well as explored how bodies of water change due to the movement of the surrounding land. The lab "Grasping the Gravity of the Situation: Gravity Anomalies and Earth Structures" inspected how gravity affects structures on Earth as well as the effect of distance from Earth on this phenomenon. In the "Preserving Plants for Fun and Science" lab, students discovered the question of how to properly preserve plants to make an herbarium—a systematically arranged collection of dried plants. "Insect Villains and Heroes" took a further look at the effects of invasive species on the invaded areas and the benefits of pollinators and their work in ecosystems. "Oh, Say Can you Seed!" taught the students how to identify various types of vital seeds, and the "Weather patterns and their effects" lab taught the students a more in-depth understanding of convection and conducting currents found in both air and water. Overall, this trip gave students an in-depth look at careers in the environmental science and the geoscience fields as well as allowed them to participate in beneficial labs related

to those fields. This was an enriching experience for our Spartans and provided them the opportunity to engage in important academic discussions with students from many schools!

Spanish Club/Honors Society Volunteer at Helping Harvest



Members of the Spanish Club and the Spanish Honors Society volunteered at Helping Harvest in October. Students spent time collaborating with each other and other regular volunteers at Helping Harvest to help fight hunger in the Berks and Schuylkill County area. Bringing students together and supporting the community were major themes in volunteering at Helping Harvest which supplies to more than 320 charitable food programs. Students helped pack boxes, distribute packaged food, and move resources within the Fresh Food Bank joining together to combat hunger. We love seeing our students give back to the community and appreciate community connections for service opportunities for our students.

AP US History: Historic Philadelphia Walking Tour



On Monday, November 7, AP United States History (APUSH) students participated in a field trip led by Mr. Hetrich in which they toured Old City, Philadelphia. This trip places APUSH students at the historic locations that shaped the founding of the American Republic. Students toured the city making stops at Independence Hall, the First Bank of the United States, and a drive-by visit to Eastern State Penitentiary, among other locations. At each landmark location, students presented historic information on the significance of the location and key historical figures in our nation's independence. They practiced their AP-style writing as well, responding to short answer questions on how the rhetoric of the American Revolution unleashed rights for a variety of Americans that the "founding fathers" may not have envisioned. APUSH students engaged in several other debates during the trip and connected their learning from the classroom to the real world very efficiently. Students valued their time in the Old City, and it is great to see our Spartans have the opportunity to explore history in real-time with this field trip that Mr. Hetrich has led for the last 12 years.

Eighth-Grade Class Trip to Gettysburg



Our eighth-grade Spartans participated in a field trip to Gettysburg. This cross-curricular trip included the history and geology (Earth Science) of Gettysburg and the historical battle of Gettysburg. On the trip, students participated in a guided bus tour of Gettysburg. After the guided tours, students visited the national cemetery in Gettysburg and completed a walking tour with their teacher chaperones stopping and reading about specific monuments in the cemetery. Many students went out of their way to thank Dr. Yoder for organizing this trip; they seemed to appreciate it and were thankful for going. Students enjoyed themselves and got to experience a bit of history and geology at the park in which they could connect their classroom experiences to the real world.

Spartan Success Day



In early November, seventh-grade students experienced Spartan Success Day at Refreshing Mountain Adventure Retreat with the support of WAEF. Success day themes included communication, collaboration, and teamwork. Students participated in team building challenges, a GPS scavenger hunt, orienteering, an elevated ropes course, and archery. These activities challenged students to focus on positive communication and embrace multiple perspectives within a group to solve a problem. Great job, Spartans!

Theatre Arts & Drama Club Visit the Yocum Institute



Students in the Jr./Sr. High School Drama Club and Theatre Arts class at the Jr./Sr. High School attended the performance of “Poe’s Unhappy Hour”—a play based on the works of Edgar Allen Poe—at the Yocum Institute. In Theatre Arts, students are currently learning and practicing how to implement improvisation into performances. The production included improvisation and the students connected the uses of it within the playback to their learnings. Students also took note of the character development on display by the professional actors and tied it to their recent discussions on the considerable importance of character development in a successful production. Not only were the students able to see such a great performance live, but some Spartans were called out of the audience to take part in the show! When the play finished, there was an opportunity for the students to ask both the cast and the director questions. We are so glad that we can provide our students with these incredible opportunities that connect their learnings in school to real-life events and allow the students to explore their interests and passions.

Girls in STEM Symposium



A group of students at the Jr./Sr. High School in grades 10-12 interested in the STEM fields attended the annual Girls in STEM Symposium at Kutztown University with computer science teacher, Mr. Minich. The eight students spent the day listening to a panel of speakers of women in the STEM field, learning about career opportunities, and meeting other students from other Berks County schools with a similar passion. Fundamentals of networking, asking questions, and exploring opportunities, whether in the biomedical field or computer science college majors were explored throughout the day. Engineers from Penske, Medical IT workers from St. Luke, and web designers were set up on tables along the outline of the room ready to answer questions and converse with all of the Berks County students, helping to expose the multitude of opportunities available to students even while still in high school. Students were able to get access to contact information and company names that offer internships, shadowing experiences, and summer volunteer opportunities to learn about STEM career pathways.

Career Day at the Jr./Sr. High School



Career Day, which took place on November 9, 2022, is an annual event for students in grades 8-12 to explore possible careers and post-secondary pathways as they begin to think about their futures after high school. Planned and executed by a committee of dedicated parents and community volunteers, with support from teachers, the counseling office, and other school staff, Career Day focuses on age-appropriate activities that encourage students to expand on their career exploration year after year. Each grade participates in different activities throughout the day with guidance from speakers and panel presenters from a variety of careers. For example, after attending panel presentations on careers that interest them in the morning, ninth-grade students toured local industries (in partnership with BBEC) to learn about various businesses. These students will also visit BCTC and a local college/university this year for full access to the many high schools and post-secondary pathways available to them. Students in grades 10 and 11 engaged in a panel presentation with local human resources representatives who spoke about employment during high school and the qualities managers look for during the hiring process. Eleventh-grade students also participated in round table discussions where representatives from various colleges/universities discussed education requirements and the careers possible with certain degrees. Our seniors learned how to give bystander CPR, participated in a service project, and walked through a financial reality fair exploring salaries and loan scenarios based on possible education and career pathways. This day would not be as successful as it's been for the last many years without the support and participation of many presenters who are willing to share

their knowledge with our Spartans. We thank them dearly and are grateful to provide students with the opportunity to explore various careers and interests for the future.

WHEC Welcomes Baby Chicks!



In fourth grade, classes get to spend twelve weeks with baby chicks! Throughout this time, students learn so much about the characteristics of chicks. They rotate the eggs, watch them hatch, hold the baby chicks (the best part!), and feed them. Students participate in the entire process as it takes up to 24 days for their chicks to hatch. Some facts the fourth-grade students shared with communications intern Kaitlyn were:

- “the temperature must be kept at 100 degrees”
- “the chicks and their habitat must get water everyday”
- “before the eggs hatched, they needed to be turned which was their exercise, and they needed to have unpolluted air.”

Through this experience, our students are learning about the chicks' life cycle and what is needed to care for them. Our Spartans are thriving with their chicks and we are so proud!

Writing with Mrs. Kozuch



At the West Reading Elementary School, Mrs. Kozuch's writing students dove into an independent choice unit. For over a month, students researched any topic that sparked their interest and wrote papers that reflected their passion. They then shared their writings with a stakeholder connected to their topic. In doing this, the students had the opportunity to explore great connections through their writing and learn that writing is more than just an assignment waiting for a grade. Several students have already heard back from the stakeholders they contacted. Spartan Junia Hershey connected with Berks Nature, writing about climate change and ways to engage more kids her age in the conversation. Berks Nature invited Junia to attend their "State of the Environment" breakfast at the DoubleTree, where they shared her writing and offered her an internship for the future! Liam Jones-Zezenski wrote about Norwegian history and about how it has shaped Norwegian policies today. He was fascinated by the limitless amount of knowledge and information available on his topic. He connected with the Norwegian-American

Chamber of Commerce, and they shared his research with their in-house author, Jorgen Flood, who sent Liam two signed copies of his books on Norwegian history. Norah Tice researched orcas in captivity and the effects on their behavior and health. She sent her findings to PETA in hopes of them publishing her article on their website. The organization responded to Norah, encouraging her to explore newsfeeds and youth councils. These are only some of the many students that sent their writings out to organizations and stakeholders in hopes of making a difference. We are so proud of their hard work in expanding their horizons to speak up about issues important to them and share their learning with the greater community!

Poster Contest at WHEC





This November, students at the Wyomissing Hills Elementary School participated in the first-ever school-wide “Attendance Matters Poster Contest” which honored winners from each grade. The attendance committee is the elementary school’s subcommittee of the district-wide Student Assistance Program (SAP). Their goal is centered around enhancing the student’s educational experiences and activities such as this contest encourage young learners to reflect on their time spent at school. Upon being introduced to this contest by Mrs. Albright, students created posters and drawings to answer questions such as “What is your favorite part of the school day?” and “How can you make each school day your best day?” These questions, geared towards specific grades, were equally given to all students along with materials such as paper and supplies. All posters created by students were hung near the front lobby area of WHEC and winners up to third place were given a ribbon, certificate, pencil, and prizes. Students were particularly enthusiastic about seeing their artwork hung in the lobby area, a reflection of the value they see in spending time at school.

WHEC and WREC Honor Veterans Day



On Veterans Day, students and staff at the West Reading Elementary Center and the Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center honored our service members. WREC honored our veterans with a special Veterans Day event. Students invited veterans in their lives to visit WREC for the morning. The veterans mingled with students in homerooms, celebrated with breakfast in the library, and then had the opportunity to speak with the students, share their experiences, and answer any questions students had. WHEC families were invited to honor a Veteran with a

special message. Those messages were made into tags, and staff members at WHEC helped to place flags around “Veteran Circle” and the school property. This year, WHEC honored over eighty Veterans that are a part of our families and community. With the help of Mrs. Main, third graders in Mrs. Wojciechowski’s class learned a beautiful song, “Thank a Vet,” that was sung on the morning announcements with the goal of spreading the love for Veterans all throughout our community. A very special opportunity came about one afternoon, and these third graders also were able to personally honor one of our WASD Bus Drivers, Mr. Jim. After learning that he was a veteran, almost immediately, the students asked if they could sing to him, and without hesitation, twenty four lovely voices were serenading Mr. Jim. It was such a memorable moment! Veterans Day will always be an important part of learning for the students at WHEC and WREC. Each year, we plan to show our gratitude and appreciation for those who sacrificed so much for us. Thank you to all members of our military for your service!

Spartans Receive National Merit Recognition



Every Fall, high school juniors at Wyomissing Area and nearly four million students nationwide take the PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test), as a practice testing experience in preparation for taking the SAT. Students taking the exam are automatically placed in the running for the National Merit Scholarship which is both an academic honor and a college scholarship. Wyomissing Area is proud to have two students nationally recognized as being among the

highest scoring 1.25% of test takers who are currently semi-finalists for the National Merit Scholarship and waiting for the finalists to be announced. We wish the following exceptional students luck with earning the National Merit Scholarship and applaud them for the recognition they have already received. We recognize their academic achievement, dedication, and tremendous efforts throughout their high school career.

Cooper Young is involved in a variety of school activities including participating on our Quiz Bowl team as co-President, playing varsity football and baseball, serving as a peer mediator, contributing to the senior video, and is a member of the National Honor Society. Outside of school, he is an active member of his youth group at West Lawn United Methodist Church. Cooper plans to attend college to major in Sports Management and aspires to work for a professional sports team or as a coach in the future.

Benjamin Zobian is an active member of our school community as a member of the Quiz Bowl team, Model United Nations, and student director and producer of Wyo5Live. He also serves as the President of the high school Drama Club, in which he played the part of Lumiere in *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* and took the lead of Christopher in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. During his high school career he also participated in athletics as a member of the soccer team. Outside of school, Ben is actively involved in Boy Scouts of America. He joined Boy Scouts at 9 years old, and acted as his troop's Senior Patrol Leader (head scout) in the 2020-2021 year. He is a triple-palm Eagle Scout and am a brother of the Order of the Arrow. For his Eagle Scout project, he built bat boxes which are mounted on trees in the Wyomissing Park System. Looking to the future, Ben plans to attend a small, liberal arts school to major in history and is considering a possible career in medicine.

In addition to recognizing semi-finalists for the National Merit Scholarship, the organization highlights additional students as Commended Scholars. This year, senior **Katherine Kauffman** received this recognition. Katherine (Katie) shares her musical talents as a section leader in our high school chours, and also participates as a member of the Wyomissing Area chorale and Camerata. She is a member of Art Club, serves on the Service Club Executive Council, participates in Spanish club, and is a member of the tennis and softball teams. Outside of school she perform in shows and runs sound for Reading Civic Theater. After high school, Katie plans to study plant science and hopes to work in a job concerning environmental sustainability using a plant science approach.

Congratulations to all of our exceptional semi-finalists and commended scholars of the National Merit Scholarships.

Best-Selling Author, Dion Leonard, Visits Wyomissing Area School District



Best-selling author, Dion Leonard, and his little dog, Gobi, visited our students at WHEC and WREC to share their amazing story of friendship. Dion met Gobi in 2016 when Dion was running an ultra-marathon in the Gobi desert. Dion was able to bring his story to life and make many curriculum connections, especially for our fifth-grade students who are working on a travel unit for their own Total Experience Learning project. Thank you to Dion Leonard for visiting and sharing your experience with our students!

Feature: Mrs. Reardon and the Physical Education Department

Physical Education teacher and department chair, Mrs. Reardon was recently interviewed by PLT4M, the company that develops the app that our Personal Fitness class uses for their workouts and our Mind & Body Connections class uses for yoga and mindfulness. From this interview, PLT4M developed an article posted on their website that you can access [here](#). This article highlights the changes that our Physical Education teachers have made to our curriculum to better accommodate the needs of students.

The Wyomissing Area Education Foundation



WYOMISSING AREA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Enriching Education in the Wyomissing Area School District

WAEF supports students and teachers in the school district in many ways, most recently by directly supporting teachers in their classrooms through our [Classroom Wishes Fund](#). We need your support to continue to fulfill our teachers' classroom wishes, so if you'd like to [make a contribution](#), please email Molly McCullough Robbins at mrobbins@wyoarea.org or visit WAEF's website: www.wyoarea-foundation.org.

Another way to support WAEF is by selecting WAEF as your charity of choice when you shop on Amazon! If you are not already an **AmazonSmile** member, simply sign up at smile.amazon.com and select WAEF as your favorite charity to start generating donations, at no cost to you.

WAEF funds supported the following projects since the start of the school year:

- **WAEF's Anne Seltzer Fund** supported the field trip for 7th graders on their Success Day - students visited Refreshing Mountain Adventure Retreat. The trip focused on social and emotional learning. This facility allowed our students to experience hands-on challenges such as survival skills, high ropes obstacles, orienteering skills, and

other team-building activities. These activities foster soft skills such as resiliency, communication, and collaboration which are keys to supporting mental health and developing leadership skills in everyone.

- **WAEF's Joanne Shields McCready Memorial Fund** supported the purchase of sets of books for all 1st-grade classrooms. Elephant & Piggie books were received in October and are already being enjoyed by our 1st-graders.



- **WAEF's Grants Committee** approved a request from Mr. Ackerman in the JSHS Library - this scanner will provide the capability to digitize all of the Colophon yearbooks in the school's collection, and will be available for use for other scanning and digitizing projects.
- Other grant ideas are being reviewed, and WASH faculty and staff are encouraged to apply for support from WAEF's Grants budget. Our committee meets monthly. The [application is available on our website](#) - please email mrobbins@wyoarea.org with questions about applying for a grant or supporting WAEF's grants budget with a donation.

About the Authors



As the Wyomissing Area School District continues to develop the Internship Program, we are fortunate to have talented students work with our Communications team to develop the articles you read in each edition of The Spartan Scoop. Our students are driven and predominantly self-guided and have the opportunity to attend district events, visit classrooms and teachers, and share positive experiences and stories about the great work in our district. Passionate students like these are a great addition to our Communications team and developing our social media posts and newsletter stories is a great experience for them.

Jenna Abousaab is a senior at Wyomissing Area and is a dedicated member of the environmental club, service club, Mini-THON, student peer tutoring, peer mediation, table tennis club and NHS. Jenna loves getting involved within the community and making a difference, so the Communications internship will be a great opportunity for her to experience activities taking place in all three Wyomissing Area school buildings and to make connections with both youth Spartans and staff. In the classroom, Jenna maintains a hard work ethic and strives for excellence and outside of school, Jenna plays competitive soccer and is the Ambassador to the Commissioner of the Girls Academy, working to implement DEI policy within the league. She is

eager to work in communications to strengthen her professional public speaking skills and to build stronger relationships with people throughout the community.

Maya Abousaab is a senior who is actively involved in our community. Although Maya does not play for any of the high school sports teams, she loves spending her time playing competitive soccer as she looks to play collegiately in the future. Maya is part of the High School Student Council, student peer tutoring, National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society, Mini-THON Committee, and peer mediation while also serving as a Class Officer for the Class of 2023. She plans to attend college to major in biology, business, or psychology on the pre-med track with hopes of becoming a surgeon. Maya chose this internship to explore the field of communications as she looks forward to the benefits of constant exposure to interviewing and reporting skills. As much as Maya loves to excel in the classroom, she enjoys time with her loved ones even more.

Vanesa Aguay is a junior at Wyomissing Area High School and is actively involved in her school community. Vanesa is the junior class president as well as Spanish Honorary Society and Spanish Club president. She enjoys being a member of student council, peer mediation, peer tutoring, Model UN, environmental club, WAEF Committee, ski club, Mini-THON chairperson, member of the service club executive committee, and secretary of the Wyomissing Area math club. Athletically, Vanesa is a member of the cross country team, plays soccer, and participates in indoor and outdoor varsity track. Vanesa loves to meet new people and volunteer her time to advocacy groups. She is excited for the opportunity to involve herself in the activities throughout the district and to develop her skills within community outreach with this internship.

Kaitlyn Brunner is a senior at Wyomissing Area. She is involved in various clubs including Big Spartan Little Spartan, Wyo5Live, Mini-THON, WAEF, latin club and Best Buddies. Kaitlyn participates on the field hockey and basketball teams as well. Kaitlyn loves the close-knit community Wyomissing Area has and is excited for this school year working with the other interns as well as faculty and students for the internship!

Bianca Flowers is a senior at Wyomissing Area. She plays on the volleyball team and is also the manager for the girls basketball team. She is a member of the student council, secretary of mini-THON, in art club, service club, environmental club, and more. The communications internship is an opportunity for her to learn important life skills and develop the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people.

Communications Coordinator, Ms. Meghan Tierney



Ms. Meghan Tierney is the mathematics Department Chair at the Jr./Sr. High School in her ninth year in the Wyomissing Area School District. She received her bachelor's degree from Albright College, earned a master's degree in Teacher Leadership through the University of Delaware, and a master's degree and supervisory certification in Educational Administration with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction Supervision at Gwynedd Mercy University. In addition to her role as a classroom teacher, she advises the National Honor Society, and serves as the Communications Coordinator for the school district. Meghan really enjoys the opportunities she has to work with students both in and out of the classroom and loves being a Spartan. Outside of school, Meghan enjoys spending time at the beach and being with family and friends.

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