

Celebrating
50
YEARS
1973-2023



**WESTERN
WAYNE
HIGH
SCHOOL**

OUR ROOTS, OUR HISTORY

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In this issue, we take a look back at the first schools in our area, the one-room school-houses.

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•A SPECIAL THANKS•

TO OUR LOCAL FIRE COMPANIES, FRED BIRMELIN, MATT FITZSIMMONS, SHANE GRODACK, GRACE PICONI-AUGELLI, KURT REED, SUE ROMANSKI, SANDY SUMMERS, DARREN THORPE, & JANE VARCO

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WELCOME

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We are honored to present this publication in celebration of 50 years of Western Wayne High School! As a tribute to a half-century of black and gold pride, this magazine showcases the memorable milestones and moments of our beloved school from the years that led to its opening in 1973 up to today. To commemorate our roots, we have made it our mission to uncover artifacts that date back decades. History is written by its victors, who tirelessly worked to lay the foundation that has created the honorable structure in which Wildcats have learned and grown for generations. From the one-room schoolhouses to the sprawling campus of Western Wayne High School, all ages of students share the memories and traditions of being a Wildcat. Students—past and present—have demonstrated PRIDE within our school by exhibiting Preparedness, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, and by being Extraordinary. As Nelson Mandela famously quoted, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” This year, we appreciate and observe the great traditions that have had a longstanding place in our Alma Mater, and we also look to the future as Wildcats carry their PRIDE from these hallowed halls to the world that awaits them.

A NOTE

FROM THE EDITOR-ADVISOR

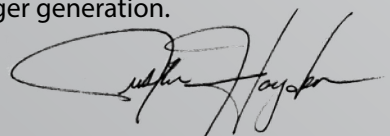
As a 2005 graduate of Western Wayne, I am excited to look back at the history of the high school and the years before the building opened its doors in January 1973. My hope is to bring the community together as we celebrate this milestone with both alumni and community members new to the district.

Over the last six years, I have been working on my family’s genealogy. This hobby of researching the ancestry has taken me to the point of documenting the present as well as looking back at the past. Taking the time to appreciate the past has taught me to cherish and record the memories of my two sons. In this issue of celebrating Western Wayne High School’s 50th anniversary, I wrote an article that links my ancestral roots to my current day career as a teacher. Although it is time that separates us from meeting our ancestors, one aspect that has been strong in our area—and must continue—is the connectedness of community.

When I think about common gathering places for the community, I think of churches, fire houses, libraries, and schools. When coming up with the idea of hosting a parade at the high school/middle school campus, I immediately thought of including our local fire companies. In this issue, I chose to recognize the hard work and long hours our volunteers sacrifice in helping and serving our community, and in celebrating our 50th, they added spirit and unity.

My wife, Jordan, also graduated in 2005 from Western Wayne. As our oldest son started Pre-K this fall, my wife and I could not be more proud for him to be a Wildcat. School shapes who we become, whether it be a club, class, sport, or teacher.

Working with the community, editorial staff of students, faculty and administration, my hope is to bring back fond memories of Western Wayne as well as create new ones, especially with our younger generation.



Justin Hayden
High School Art Department
Class of 2005



OUR ROOTS, OUR HISTORY

THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSES

By Elizabeth Washine

The roots of our educational institutions date back centuries to what is now commonly known as the “One-Room Schoolhouse.” The first ever schoolhouse was established on April 23, 1635, in Boston, Massachusetts. In this small setting, children of all ages and abilities were taught together in one room with one teacher, typically a woman.

During this time period, it was not essential for children to attend school. Students often skipped class for weeks on end to tend to crops, among other jobs on farms. Others simply couldn’t afford to attend. Unfortunately, some children lived without any education at all. School was not free; parents often paid their child’s tuition and/or provided living quarters for the school teacher while providing other commodities for their children to attend as an exchange.

In 1809, educating children became a law as additional public schools were built. Years later, the “Pennsylvania School Law of 1834” made taxation the major source of school funding. With the passage of this new law, school was to become “public and free to all.” Students usually lived within walking distance of their schools, but with the buildings that were established, bussing is now necessary.

The schoolhouses averaged approximately sixteen by twenty-four feet in size and seven feet in height. Early schoolhouses were constructed from various materials such as brick, stone, and wood. In 1878, a crude fire broke loose in a schoolhouse in York, Pennsylvania. This structure was later known as the “Burnt Cabin” This led to the outlawing of wooden schoolhouses. However, the history of these simplistic buildings, digs abundantly deeper. This led to the schools we have today.

While one-room schoolhouses may no longer be in operation, a few buildings exist today, abandoned. Four of which were octagonal buildings. The first, The Stone Jug, is located in South Canaan

Township. The Stone Jug was built in 1830, made from fieldstone. Students attended school here in this small one-room structure until in the early 1900s. Today, it still stands abandoned at the corner of Cortez Road and Schott Road in Wayne County. The second is the Maplewood Schoolhouse which opened in September of 1876. Located on the corner of Lake Henry Road and Circle Road, this school is now owned by the Avoy Church.

Some other one-room schoolhouses are the Jones Lake Octagonal Schoolhouse (1851/52), Gravity, Elm, Bidwell Hill, Arlington, Hollisterville, Keen Lake (1848), Lerch, and several others. None of these structures remain now.

In 1938, the new South Canaan Consolidated School building opened its doors, closing several of the one-room schoolhouses. One of the eight that closed, was the Lerch School. The Lerch School was located next to what is now Country Trails in Waymart. The Telephone Co. now stands in its place. The other seven consisted of the Box School, previously pinpointed at 652 Tannery Road; The East School, placed on the corner of St. Tikhon’s Road and North Baker Road; The Frisbie School, on the corner of McKinney Road and Mid Valley Road; The Hemlock School, on Easton Turnpike, near Hemlock road; The Spangenberg School on Robinson Road; and The Union School, located on Jubinsky Road. The Layton School had closed years before.

It was very significant to be knowledgeable of the history of education. The institutions wouldn’t be where they are now without our beginnings in these one-room schoolhouses. **WW**

Sources:
Shaffer, Ronald. *South Canaan As I Remember It*. 2007
Barbe, Walter. Reed, Kurt. *History of Wayne County, PA*. 1998



THE MAPLEWOOD SCHOOLHOUSE

By Justin Hayden

My great-great-grandmother, Edith Estella Kellam Black, was raised in Maplewood, PA. Before she was married and had children, Edith taught at the Maplewood schoolhouse for the 1898-1899 school year, earning just fifty cents a day.

Edith's family farm, a short distance from the schoolhouse on what is now Lake Henry Road, was the same farm where I grew up.

Maplewood, formerly known as Forrest Mills, was a busy hamlet near the western edge of Lake Township in Wayne County.

The Pennsylvania Coal Company put in a gravity railroad which was completed in 1850. About thirty-five years later the gravity was abandoned and the Erie & Wyoming Valley Railroad built a line from Scranton to Hawley which went through Maplewood—carrying both passengers and cargo. Maplewood developed as a result of large lumber and manufacturing interests; town leaders built a sawmill and chair factory, bringing employment opportunities. Maplewood became a thriving village as those jobs brought families to the area, thus bringing enough of a population to build a local one-room schoolhouse.

As with everything new, there was controversy regarding where to build the one-room school. The residents living at the east end of Maplewood wanted the schoolhouse built at the top of Freight House Hill, where there had been a freight house built for the gravity railroad. They even went as far as to begin clearing the land for the schoolhouse, but first came the election for a new school director. After Sylvanus Osborne won the election, the residents living near Lake Henry requested that Mr. Osborne evaluate the situation before building the schoolhouse. Eventually, the townspeople left the decision up to Mr. Osborne who decided to build it on the corner of Lake Henry Road and Circle Road.

In September 1876, the completed

Maplewood schoolhouse opened its doors to students. The children learned reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling. More advanced students also learned geography and history.

Around 1894 students no longer had to purchase their own books because the school board provided them. The school added grammar, physiology and hygiene to the curriculum.

A few years later, in 1897, Maplewood's population had grown so much that school officials added a second room to the school. The original room still held students in grades one through four, and the additional room held students from grades five through eight.

Several communities in the area also had their own one-room schoolhouses, but over the next twenty years, several of them closed, including the Cortez and Saco schools located in Jefferson Township, Lackawanna County.

The influx of students caused a larger enrollment at the Maplewood school. Horse-drawn



1944 - Top row: Peggy Ovens, Mary Spangenberg, David Whitaker
 Third row: Viola Vandermark, Tommy Jones, Gladys Whitaker, Elna Ovens
 Second Row: Naomi Shaffer, Billy Ovens, John Higgins
 Bottom row: Buddy Hazen, Paul Berger, Jennie Black



Illustration by Justin Hayden

wagons and sleighs transported the students residing farther from Maplewood.

The schoolhouse is the oldest public building still standing in Maplewood. This quiet village was much more active about 90 years ago, with its large icehouse located on Lake Henry, as well as a train station and pavilion for passengers who wished to picnic. Maplewood also had its own post office, outdoor theater, and general stores.

Once newer, larger schools opened in Jefferson Township in 1923 and Salem Township opened its Hamlin School, Wayne County in 1938, enrollment in the Maplewood school started to decline. There was no longer a need for two teachers. Students now attended the Lake School in Lake Ariel for grades seventh and eighth. The Maplewood school closed its doors on June 8, 1949, seventy-three years ago.

The Maplewood school building still stands today. In recent years—before passing way—I had the privilege of interviewing, Elna Ovens Wargo, Warren Van Leuven, and Mary Spangenberg, the last surviving students who attended the schoolhouse. They shared memories of their experiences as students and taught me just how different schools are today.

Elna Ovens Wargo remembers playing

hopscotch with her classmates in the mornings before school started. "I was the only one in my class when I was in fourth and fifth grades," Elna remembers. There were only as many as thirteen students when she was attending the Maplewood school!

Living and learning in such a small community had its own perks. "Everyone tried to get to school early because we received a nickel a week for doing classroom chores," Elna said. "Students swept the floor, clapped the erasers, and swept the outhouse toilets. They also brought in wood and coal to burn in the stove. I remember that the general store near Bob Black Road was only a hop, skip, and a jump from the school." Elna admitted with a chuckle that those precious nickels did not last long. "After school, we would run across the stone bridge to the store to buy penny candy with our nickel."

Warren Van Leuven has mixed feelings about those nickel-worthy chores. "I felt like a janitor more than a school boy at times, carrying the coal in for the stove, and fetching water from the well for the kids to drink."

What was the school day like? Warren Van Leuven remembers "sitting in the back row, and the teacher teaching us separately depending on the grade

and subject.”

Mary Spangenberg explained, "During cold days, we would move all the desks and huddle around the stove to stay warm as the teacher taught us.”

“We had to make up our own games for recess. We played hide-and-go-seek, and the game, [they called] Heiley Over, where we split up into two groups and we would throw a ball over the coal house to the other side and then tag whoever caught the ball,” Mary Spangenberg says. Warren Van Leuven recalls, “After recess, some of us kids would sneak frogs into the schoolhouse. Once, a friend and I put a snake in the teacher’s desk.”

Although students today look forward to snow days, the Maplewood school’s students never experienced such a luxury.

“School never closed like they do today,” recalls Mary Spangenberg. “If we had a really bad blizzard Friend Black, one of the neighbors, would pick us up for school with his horse and sleigh.” The kind neighbor kept blankets in his sleigh to help his passengers stay warm on the ride to school. “If it was bad when we got out of school, he would take us home as well,” she added with a smile.

Although the desks, chalkboards, and potbelly stove are now gone, the outside of the schoolhouse looks much like it did over 100 years ago. The Avoy Christian Church now owns the building.

Long-ago generations of my family have left their mark on the acres that define our property. My ancestors scratched a living from the same land where I grew up. I cannot fathom the amount of physical stamina my ancestors must have had to clear the land for pastures, build stonewalls by hand, cultivate the fields, and feed their families on home-grown and made-from-scratch meals.

I have built my home across from the schoolhouse on property which has been in our family for five generations. I am proud that my sons, Levi and

Ezra, will be the sixth generation.

As Levi and Ezra grow older, I will share memories of my school days, including going to the library to check-out books, using encyclopedias for research papers, and working with a 35 mm film camera in photography class. I will explain that passing hand-written notes between classes was the form of communication before text messaging came about.

As I look across the road at the Maplewood schoolhouse, I am reminded how much my life is an extension of my ancestors’ lives. Like Edith, my great-great-grandmother, I am a teacher. Although the school system and learning styles have changed with technology and time, the core goals of holistic education: intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and creative potentials, remain the same.

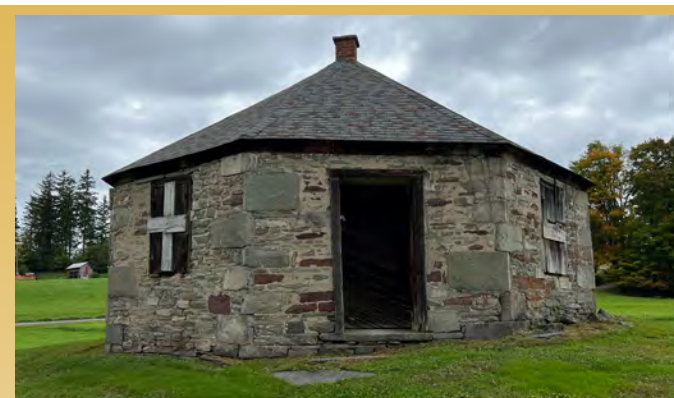


Florence Jones, one of the last school teachers.



1912 - The Maplewood Schoolhouse students with teachers: Gertrude Lee on the left and Charlotte Gilpin Black on the right. School Director of this school at this time was Aaron Black, Edith's husband.

A LOOK BACK OUR ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSES



2022 - The Stone Jug Schoolhouse on Cortez Road



1938 - Last class that attended the Lerch School in South Canaan Twp.



Lake Ariel One-Room Schoolhouse



1940s Elm School located on Slikman's Road in Lake Twp.

Pictured here, are a few of our many one-room schoolhouses that were dotted across the townships that currently make up the Western Wayne School District.



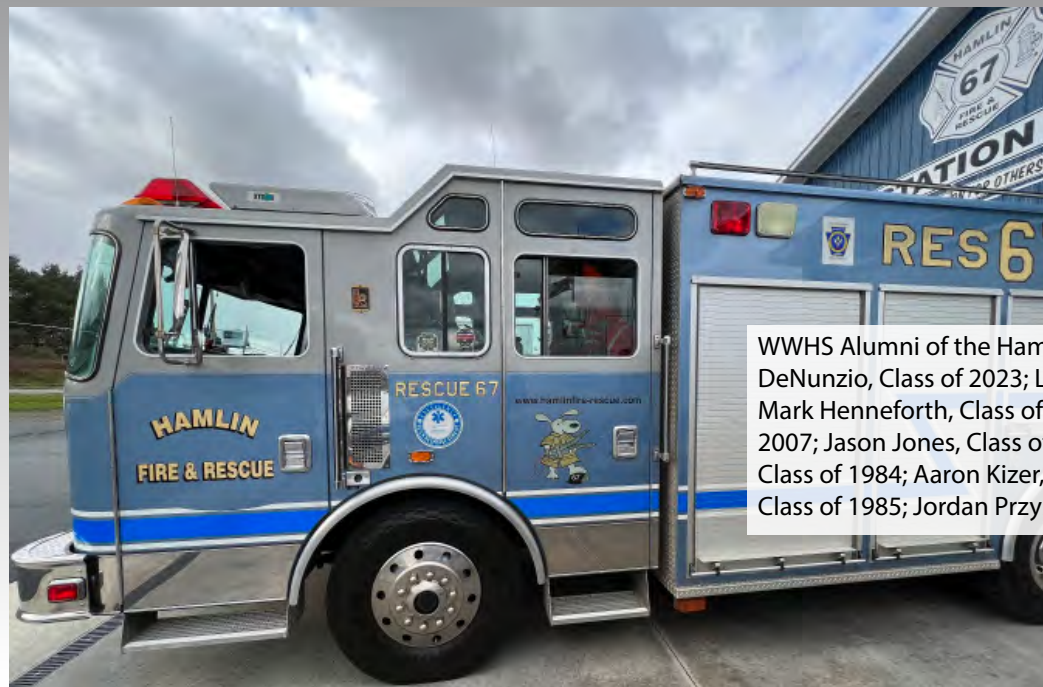
Waynesville School in Canaan Twp. 1958-59

COMMUNITY: FIRE DEPARTMENTS

We would like to honor our local firefighters, EMT's, and fire company personnel for their perseverance and bravery. They are considered heroes for all of the courage they exhibit. This courage has been shown by the way they keep our communities safe, save family members, rescue homes, run into dangerous situations, and many more tasks. These courageous firefighters put their own lives at risk in order to save ours.



WWHS Alumni of the Waymart Volunteer Fire Co: from left, Jacob Christman, Class of 2025; Jesse Babcock, Class of 2024; Roger McKinney, Class of 2016; Cody Tallman, Class of 2013; Courtney Kizer, Class of 2015; Julia Lambertson, Class of 2021; Jordan Thompson, Class of 2008; and Amanda Black Chapman, Class of 2000. Not pictured: fire chief David Zdziarski, Class of 2016; Adam Thompson, Class of 2007; Jim Nolan, Class of 1984; and Rick Utegg, Class of 1981.



WWHS Alumni of the Hamlin Fire & Rescue Co: Kaitlyn DeNunzio, Class of 2023; Lori Henneforth, Class of 1984; Mark Henneforth, Class of 1984; Shane Howe, Class of 2007; Jason Jones, Class of 2020; Kim Kristoff Jones, Class of 1984; Aaron Kizer, Class of 2012; Mark Kizer, Class of 1985; Jordan Przybylkowski, Class of 2017



WWHS Alumni of the Lake Ariel Fire Co: from left, Kailey Tickner, Class of 2023; Heidi Claus, Class of 1986 holds a photo of her brother David Claus, the fire chief for 17 years was a graduate of the Class of 1977, Roger McKinney, Class of 2016; and Billy Polley, Class of 2016. Not pictured: Bob Benedict, Class of 1999; Sarah Brodowski, Class of 2014; David Claus, Class of 1982; and Don Pontosky, Class of 1972.



WWHS Alumni of the Maplewood Fire & Rescue Co: from left, fire chief Nick Corazzi, Class of 2014; Donald Gershey, Class of 1980; Steve Piotrowski, Class of 2008; Jason Barry, Class of 1993; Justin Wittenbrader, Class of 2004; Austin Kyzer, Class of 2014; Thomas Tomczyk, Class of 2022; and Chase Knecht, Class of 2026. Not pictured: Tanner Brooks, Zach Chrzan & Jeff Chrzan, Class of 2014; Hunter Draper, Class of 2020; Dave Corazzi, Class of 1984; Meghann Clark, Class of 2019; Billy Ovens, Class of 1977; Florent Barry, Class of 1962 and Carolyn Black, Class of 1959 both from Lake Consolidated H.S.



COMMUNITY: 50TH PARADE

The Western Wayne Community joined together on Saturday, September 24, for a parade to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the school. A number of groups marched including the Western Wayne faculty and staff, members of the chorus from the middle school, high school, and chorus alumni, the Wildcat Marching Band, some local fire house companies, the members of the 2022 Homecoming Court, the Wildcat Cheerleaders, members of Wildcat sports teams, the Spanish Club, and others.

It was a beautiful day and community members lined up at the Western Wayne Middle and High School campuses to watch the parade that went around the school grounds. "It was awesome to be back to celebrate this event with my friends in the music community at school," Nick DeCandis, Class of 2022, said.



Sheri Locklin Palmer, Class of 1986



Demanie Hogan and Doug Buchinski both from the Class of 1994



Brian Hodorawis, Class of 1989 and Tamara Hazen Hodorawis, Class of 1991



The Western Wayne sports teams come together to celebrate



Kelly Mousley Hamble, Class of 1987 & grandson Jesse



Jim Utegg, Class of 1983 and his brother Rick Utegg, Class of 1981



John Gaudenzi teacher for 36 years, Jamie Polley, Class of 2001; Melissa Polley, Class of 1999; Eric Geisheimer, Class of 1998; Justin Collins, Class of 1999; Tim and Chrissy McClure, Class of 2000; and Glen Garillo, Class of 1988



Kristy Skelton Rusin and Steve Rusin both from the Class of 1995





Bethany Salak, Class of 2010 with son Lincoln



Alyssa Krowiak Salak, Class of 2010; Billy Salak, Class of 2008 with son Billy V



Jack Lamberton, Class of 1966 from Waymart H.S., Chris Reed, Class of 1964 from Waymart H.S., & Denny Reed, Class of 1961 from Lake Ariel H.S.



John Scott, Class of 1992 & Jenny Wenkosky Scott, Class of 1990



Homecoming court 2022



Principal Paul Gregorski, Class of 2000; Jess Devine Gregorski, Class of 2001 and their daughter Calista, Carrie Wittenbrader on right



COMMUNITY: HOMECOMING

It was a beautiful night on Friday, Sept. 30, when the Homecoming Court took to the field before the home football game against West Scranton at Western Wayne's Sharkey-Rossetti Stadium. The court crossed the field prior to the game escorted by their parents to be honored in front of their family and friends before winners were announced. Seniors Luke Janiszewski and Cyrah Bihler were crowned Homecoming King and Queen respectively. Congratulations to all the members of our court this year!



Ella Dougher, Class of 2022 is recognized for her achievements with her coach Justin Collins, Class of 1999.



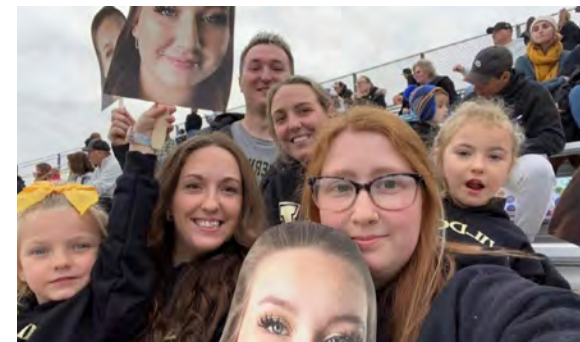
2022 Homecoming Court: from left, Lucas Putman, Catherine Cavage, Kourtney Franklin, Kyle Guarino, Skylar Long, Homecoming King Luke Janiszewski, Homecoming Queen Cyrah Bihler, Dustin Ferraro, Niya Acosta, and Marshall Davis



Dylan 1st grade and Donnie McDonough Jr. 2nd grade



Bottom from left: Andrew Oudshoorn, Class of 2020; Keith Franc, Class of 2019; Nick DeCandis, Class of 2022. Top from left: Seth Lamberton, Class of 2018; Joe Jezowski, Class of 2021; Julia Lamberton, Class of 2021; Maddie Weinczyk, Class of 2022; and Tyler Velez, Class of 2018



Fans in the stands hold face cut-outs of Kourtney Franklin. From left: Dalilah with her mother Tia Franklin, Class of 2014 with her twin sister Samantha Franklin, Class of 2014 with daughter Rylee. Back: Darryl Swoyer, Class of 2015. Front: Samantha Reese

COMMUNITY: CAR SHOW

The Western Wayne Hot Rod Club, partnered with the Drama Club, hosted their 7th annual Car Show on Sunday, Oct. 2nd. Despite the brisk weather, the community came out to support the students. Cars filled the parking areas by the football stadium and Hot Rod Club members were able to interact with the owners of a variety of classic cars. In addition, Drama Club students dressed in 50s attire mingled with attendees as old-time music played. There was even an alumni section of cars to be seen. Prizes were awarded to the best in show and over twenty raffle baskets were given to their lucky winners.

"I was thrilled to be able to have my truck in the car show," Rebecca King, Class of 2020 said, "I was a part of shop classes and the Drama Club when I was in school."



Steve Salley taught math and computer sciences at WWHS for 35 years



Michael Armstrong, Class of 1999



John Seeley, Class of 1985



Jesse Van Deusen, Class of 1989



Joann Howell, Class of 1991



Joy Fisher, Class of 1996

COMMUNITY: SENIOR NIGHT



Alison Enslin, Alex Enslin, & Doug Keill



Mark, Matthew, & Shirley Bryant



Laura Walker Swingle, Class of 1999; Nate, & Al Swingle, Class of 1995



Bill Guarino, Class of 1996; Kyle, & Sharon Fuller Guarino, Class of 1996



Jeff, Emily, & Kristin Brophy



Anthony, Aidan, & Melanie Donnini



Anthony Jenkins, Jaden Owens, & Annette Skowron



Zina Straway & Zander Godley



Kenneth, Luke, & Keri Locklin Janiszewski, Class of 1991



Scott, Amanda, & Vita David



Adam Januszkiewicz & Ewa Chrzanowka



COMMUNITY: SENIOR NIGHT



Shane, Lilli, & Brooke Shaffer Morcom, Class of 1999



Nancy, Maggie, & Frank Nagle



Nicole, Isabella, & Brian O'Donnell



Paul Guidice, Paul Guidice jr., Danielle Salamak, & Meadow Guidice



Krista Moffitt, Ash, & Joe Mangieri



Jason Pfister class of 1998, Jennifer Hall, & Denise Pfister



Gina, Ivan, & John Knecht



Tricia, Juliana, & Scott Kurent



Keith Havenstein Class of 1992, Bridget, & Kristin Havenstein



Maria Gamarro, Brandon Lopez-Gamarro, & Nikita Rud, Class of 2025



Michele, Daniel, Eric, & Anthony Merone, Class of 2019



Susan, Julia, & Heath Phillips



Shelly Samson Tickner, Class of 1990; Kailey, & James Tickner



Paula Malcolm Peirce, Class of 1990; Evan, & Robert Peirce, Class of 1988



Gavin & Stacey Toy, Class of 2001



Heidi Crusius, Alexiah Qualters, & John McCabe, Class of 2022



Ron Hull, Gina Mattern, Alexis & Tim Pearsall, & Heidi Wilhelm



Jessie Parry, Alex Wallace, & Allison Perry



Besty, Jaylene Roca, & Eric Vanter



Seniors of the boys soccer team from left: Deirdre & Michael Smith, Steve Mitchell, Class of 1999; Dawn Amorine Mitchell, Class of 2003; Nick, Andy, & Holly Bugno Hrosovsky, Class of 2002; Melissa Guman Ferraro, Class of 1998; Dustin, & Tony Ferraro, Class of 1999; Denise Kotz, Class of 1978; Marshall, & Scott Davis, Class of 1982; Andy, Alex, & Brian Chapman, Class of 1995.

COMMUNITY: SENIOR NIGHT



Cindy Coles, Ella, & Jeanie Pavlovich



Steve Fahnestock, Class of 1998; Jaque Morris, & Ceanna Fahnestock



Brian Long, Class of 1992; Skylar, Jamie Smith Long, Class of 1995



Chris Nicholson, Class of 1995; Kylie, & Jennie Reed, Class of 2003



Bob Black Class of 1983; Eleanor, & Nerissa Black



Luke, Jaden, Stacey, & Makayla Gregory



Randy, Amanda, & Valerie Gravine



Leonard, Alaina, & Christa Maiocco



Andrew Heubeger, Class of 1996; Cyrah, & Tara Bihler



Seniors of the girls tennis team from left: Jennifer Laity, McKenzie Laity, Karen Buchinski, Alyson Buchinski, Doug Buchinski, Brenda Bryan, Julie Bryan, Jim Bryan, Anjali de Leon-Bello, Joe Bello, Analise de Leon-Bello, Michelle de Leon, Landon Byron, Niya Acosta, and Carter Byron.

COMMUNITY: YOUR PHOTOS

As they say, "a photo is worth a thousand words." Here, we would like to share your photos that span decades. Please do a bit of searching in finding photos that relate to the history of WW. Thank you!



March 2013 - Julie Rieutort & Alyssa DeKenipp winners of the National Scholastic Art Awards. Photo courtesy of Justin Hayden



August 2022 - Secretaries: Michele Rosko 26 years at WW, Bridgit Erb 25 years at WW & Sue Romanski 40 years at WW. Their last, first day of school. Photo courtesy of Mindy Maros



February 5, 1940. Walter Black's school bus by old Hallock Store. 1936 Chevy. Photo courtesy of Carol Black Davis



1973 - Class trip to Washington D.C. at Washington Monument. Photo courtesy of Betty Stoner



2002 - FBLA members, front: Brett Hollister & Grace Clauss Back: Wendy Hollendonner, Jenny Hollister, Tomlynn Fallon, & Megan Laskowski Photo courtesy of Fran Vitovsky



1977 Yearbook - WW cheerleaders

Have photos to share? Please email your photos related to Western Wayne's history for consideration to be included here, in our 50th anniversary magazine! jhayden2@westernwayne.org

DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

By: Elizabeth Wasylyk



2012 graduate, Garrett Enslin, currently works for Holtec International as a Mechanical Design Engineer. He attended the United States Naval Academy, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering. Along with his degree, he has had six years of experience in the Nuclear Navy. As Garrett looks back on his time at Western Wayne, he remembers being a part of the school's wrestling team and winning the District Championship during his senior year. Garrett adds that he is extremely grateful for all of the teachers he had during high school. He shares that, "We are truly lucky to have such a talented, committed array of teachers and I don't think I would have had the success I have without their involvement in my life."

Garrett wants to encourage all of today's students to appreciate and be an active part of our community. He advises us, "Shop local. Try not to be wasteful. Pick up trash when you see it, even if it's not yours."

Derek Gilpin, a 1999 graduate, shares that after he completed his Bachelor's and Master's degree in Biochemistry from both Wilkes University and the University of Scranton, he became head of manufacturing process development for Novavax, a vaccine company. This role requires him to move the process of creating a vaccine from a lab to a large-scale commercial process. When prompted with what his favorite aspect of his career was, he replied that he most enjoys "the direct impact of the work we do for our patients, for example, when we develop or implement a process that has an immediate impact on vaccines available to people." As for Derek's high school experience, he highlights how the people he went to school with were the most memorable. He reflects on this time, saying that "after leaving WW, I realized not everyone has the experience of knowing most of the people in your school and having a team of educators and administrators invested in your success."



Derek would like to advise the students to avoid becoming obsessed with planning an entire career right now. He recognizes that it can be easy to focus on certain tests, programs, internships, or colleges. He encourages students, saying, "the most important thing is developing critical thinking skills and problem solving ability. The focus of my career and many of my colleagues has shifted many times, but despite that, those skills above will help you the most."



Tattooist and 2019 graduate, Melanie Roberts has continued her passion for art at the tattoo parlor, Vivid Ink, in Honesdale, PA. Her journey to this career has been a long-time dream come true. When asked about what she loves about her job, Melanie responded, "I've never been so successful in an environment where I can truly be myself. I get to do what I love and put my artwork on people that they can carry with them forever." She feels honored to work along-side her fellow co-workers, who are also talented artists and act as mentors to her. When she reflects back on her time at Western Wayne, she fondly remembers her participation in the art show during her senior year where her display won first place. She happily recalled how that experience boosted her confidence, both in her art and within herself. As for her favorite teacher, Melanie says that it is a toss-up between "Mr. Hayden and

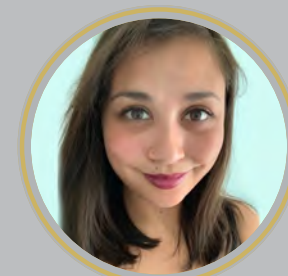
Ms. Flynn"—who retired soon after she graduated.

For all the students at Western Wayne today, she advises that although high school is difficult in so many ways, no matter what you pursue for a career or a hobby, you can accomplish anything. She leaves Wildcats with the advice, "If you truly put your heart into what you love, and you believe in yourself and YOUR feelings about both you and your work, everything will ALWAYS work out just the way they're supposed to."

Sam Giombetti, who graduated back in 2013, is currently living in Los Angeles, California. After studying at LIM College in New York and receiving her Bachelor's degree in Visual Merchandising, she moved to LA. She now works at a Scandinavian fashion brand—Anine Bing—as the head of Visual Merchandising and Display department. When prompted to share what she loves about her career, she responded that she loves the opportunity to travel to stores across the world. Sam then said, "I also enjoy being in such a creative atmosphere, while also gaining more critical business skills." Sam recalls her favorite teacher at her alma mater as Mrs. Carmody, who she said "was an integral part of my high school experience and introduced me to a realistic career in the fashion industry." She also reflects back on her fondest memory here: her TSA competition, and the time she placed at the national level in the design category.



Today, Sam encourages all students at Western Wayne to trust that things happen for a reason. She wants to tell the Wildcats today that "Nothing is impossible, it just might take a lot of hard work to get to where you want to be, but know that it will always be worth it."



Tatiana Samson—a 2010 graduate—is a registered nurse and case manager for Accolade Inc., where she works with individuals who have been discharged from the hospital. She helps to provide these patients with resources and education to navigate them through the healthcare system and make informed decisions about their health to prevent readmissions. Her credentials include a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania as well as board certification in Gerontological Nursing through the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Right now, she is working towards her Case Management certification. In response to the question of what she loved about her job, Tatiana responded, "I love that I have the ability to empower people

to improve their health, all while being able to work from home!" She recalls her favorite teacher back at Western Wayne to be Mrs. Masankay, whom she had for both homeroom and AP Chemistry. She has several memorable experiences from her high school days, too. She listed that her most memorable experiences included "competing in FBLA at the state and national levels, being on the tennis team, and, of course, the gym tournaments-badminton, pickleball, and racquetball."

Today, Tatiana wants the current Western Wayne students to remember that we don't have to face every challenge alone. She encourages us to "be kind and supportive to one another...it costs absolutely nothing, but still holds a great deal of value."

Julie (Peet) Gallo is now the principal at Susquehanna Community Elementary School, since her graduation in 1990. After being originally hired as a Reading Specialist, she then advanced to become a Response to Instruction and Intervention Coordinator, and more recently, the district's Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Coordinator, before becoming the principal. She has earned her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education from Marywood University, then her Master's in Reading Education. Additionally, she earned a Reading Supervisor Certification from Marywood University and her Educational Administration Certification from the University of Scranton. She shares that even after 19 years of working at Susquehanna Community Elementary School, she "enjoys spending time with the students, whether that is watching them engage in learning in the classroom, working with them to solve a problem, or listening to them share something about their lives." As she thinks back to her own high school days, she mainly remembers all of her days of being in the marching band best, specifically the time when the band won the Atlantic Coast Championship. On these experiences, she says "Our band was very talented, and we all had a lot of fun together at football games, parades, band camp, and competitions."



Julie wants all students at Western Wayne today to discover their passions. She shares how her love for reading and being around children for her career has brought her so much joy, and she encourages us to do the same. Julie advises, "Discover what is important to you and make it central to your life."



Law clerk and 2010 graduate, Chloe (Karnick) Romanowski works at the Wayne County Court of Common Pleas. Her path to her current success began at Marywood University, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Business. After initially working for a bank, she decided to attend the University of Baltimore School of Law, where she earned her Juris Doctorate degree. Her current position involves a great deal of legal research, along with plenty of writing. On this, Chloe says, "I enjoy it because I am always working on something new." When she thinks back on her high school years, she most remembers her AP English class and teacher, Mrs. Tylutki. She reflects on this, saying, "I liked the fact that it was a small class, and I enjoyed reading the assigned novels and plays." Along with her

English class, she fondly recalls traveling for FBLA for both the state and national competitions with some of her best friends.

Chloe asks all Wildcats now to relax and enjoy the time we have at Western Wayne. She advises, "Even if you're a planner like me, don't put unnecessary pressure on yourself to have the future completely figured out."

Since her graduation in 2013, Allie Yankey has studied at Temple University for her Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry. She is currently in her final year of a PhD program in Molecular & Cellular Biology & Genetics at Drexel University. During this time, she is searching for a career in the medical communications field. She describes this career, saying "It's a lesser known field, but it encompasses science journalism, editing, and industry writing like working on the communication to patients and doctors about a particular new treatment." When Allie remembers her high school days, she thinks of all of the extracurricular activities that she participated in despite her involvement in higher-level classes. She was a member of cross country, track and field, marching band, and the annual spring musicals. She shares that "Being a team member or cast member to some really impressive people was always fun because you get to feel like you're contributing to something bigger than just yourself."



Allie encourages all Wildcats today to keep their options open and enjoy the process of life. She says "You may not be the star athlete or student, but if you're doing things you like and you're around people who support you and whom you support, then it's worth it to be involved in things that may just be for fun."



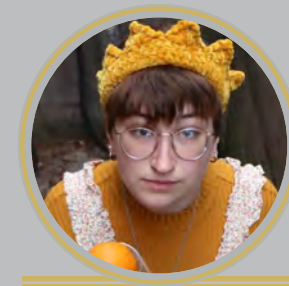
Dr. Lorna (Lamberton) Johns, a 1976 graduate, is now retired after years of working in education. Dr. Johns first attended Bloomsburg College and earned a Bachelor's degree in 1980, and returned to school in 1995 for her Master's degree in Elementary Education at Marywood College. Just a year later, she earned her Superintendent Letter of Eligibility from Marywood University. She also earned her Ph. D. in Human Development in 1999 and Specialization: School Administration in 2003, both at Marywood. As for her career, Dr. Johns has had quite the impressive one. She began as an Early Childhood Teacher at Western Wayne School District from 1981-2000, and during that time she also became the PSEA Special Education Cadre 1994-1996, where she focused on special education law and adaptations and accommodation. From 2000 to 2010, she acted as the Section 504 Coordinator. In 2000, she also served as the Director of Instructional Services at Western Wayne until 2012, where she moved on to become an Educational Consultant until 2014. Along with that, she was an Adjunct Instructor for NEIU #19, Wilkes University, and Marywood University. She was also a member of the Pennsylvania State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) Advisory Board from 2008 to 2011 and was the President of the Wayne County Children and Youth Advisory Board from 2001 to 2003. When prompted to reflect back on all of her years of working with the school, she said, "I feel fortunate to have experienced a fulfilling career and worked with exceptional professionals." Dr. Johns also remembers her time as a student at Western Wayne, recalling her favorite teacher as Mrs. Stoner, whom she says "remained my mentor well into my adulthood."

After many years of being a part of the Wildcat family, Dr. Johns advises, "Don't ever let someone tell you that you're not smart enough to achieve your dreams."

2003 graduate, Corey Neville, has been a high school music teacher in Pittsburgh for the past 16 years. After graduating, he studied at Duquesne University for his Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education. He later returned to school at Boston University to earn a Masters of Music in Music Education degree, along with a few post-graduate classes at Ohio State University, which were specific to teaching string instruments. Corey leads his school's concert band, marching band, string orchestra and percussion ensemble, as well as teaching AP Music Theory. Corey shares that he has the honor of having the same students in his classes for up to four years in a row. He feels that the one of the best parts of his job is "getting to know students and their families very well and having a front row seat to their personal growth as they work toward being ready to leave high school and move on to whatever life has in store for them next." He adds that he loves getting to express his passion for music every day for a living. When asked to choose his favorite teacher from WW, he expressed that although it is difficult to pick one, his music teachers Mr. Stedenfeld, Mr. Lopotofsky, Mrs. Jobson and Mr. Bell all played an important role in his passion for music. He noted that Mr. Stedenfeld is the inspiration behind his career today, and that "Mr. Sted worked very hard to get me involved with band—and becoming drum major my senior year was a life-changing experience that made me realize that I found teaching music more fulfilling than just performing it." He also mentioned that outside of music, Miss Houlgrave, Mrs. Bochnovich, Mr. Matechek, Mr. Totsky, Mrs. Racht, and both Mr. Shaffers were his favorite teachers.



Corey would like to encourage current Wildcats to appreciate all of the opportunities and people that are presented to them at Western Wayne. He leaves the students with this: "Don't wait to take the time to appreciate what you have right in front of you—you are lucky to be a Wildcat."



Ty Rain Alpaugh is now working for a company called Zero Point Zero Production in New York City, since their graduation in 2018. Ty has a Bachelor's degree in Film and German Studies from Vassar College, and through a connection made at Vassar, Ty earned a role as Media Manager at Zero Point Zero Production. Ty's role as Media Manager is to prepare footage from shoots and media from archivists for use by the editors. Ty shares that "I love methodical work; the content we produce is interesting, and my coworkers are incredible people." Ty reflects back on times at Western Wayne and recalls all of the memories made and time spent with close friends from years of marching band and the musicals. Ty says in regards to these groups, that "It's just so much fun to be a part of something bigger than yourself, focusing on creating a great show together. I feel the same way working in entertainment now." Ty also mentioned how joyful it can be to reminisce on those times "just by putting on a certain Spotify playlist."

As for Ty's advice to us Wildcats, "I would like to say that even though it seems cheesy and for those who might need it, it gets better."

Matt Buering, who graduated from the Class of 2011, works as the manager of the accounting department at Marshall's Machinery. To get here, he earned his Bachelors of Business Administration degree- with concentration in Accounting- as well as a Masters of Business Administration degree with a concentration in Finance both at Marywood University. His most memorable experience was participating in FBLA. He remembers his favorite teachers being "Ms. Fran Vitovsky and Ms. Summers."



Have a Department Spotlight alumni suggestion?
Please email our Editorial Director, Elizabeth, at 23512@wwsd.io

THE ARCHIVES: HOMECOMING



1974 - WWHS's first Homecoming Court. From left: Kathy Tysiak, King Dave Wilding, Principal Lavern Merritt, Queen Donna Chapman Forrest, and Jennifer Keen Wertz

An Interview with WWHS's First Homecoming Queen

By Edith Sheehan

The tradition of homecoming King and Queen dates back all the way to Western Wayne's very first years and has been a celebrated tradition for students of all generations. However, it was not all the same as it is nowadays. Football was not as popular as we know it as today. In those early years, basketball was the sport everyone knew and was invested in, meaning that homecoming was held during basketball season instead of today's football season. This opinion differed with no one, and especially not with Western Wayne's first Homecoming Queen, Donna Chapman Forrest. Donna was an athlete—playing basketball, softball, volleyball and track—who's years at Western Wayne were filled with wonderful friendships.

The Western Wayne High school opened its doors in January, 1973 and began the tradition of homecoming the following school year. The year and a half that Donna attended Western Wayne High School, she noted, was an adjustment to say the least. Half of the students and staff were unfamiliar to her because of the convergence of the Lake Ariel High School and the Waymart High school. Memories, that were nothing short of sublime, still live with our former queen today. She clearly recalled that both her and the student body were permitted to vote on our school's colors. The black and gold are a vibrant legacy of Donna and the other pioneering students.

"We [the Lake Ariel students] chose the colors closest to those of Lake Ariel, black and orange. We outnumbered Waymart High School's burgundy and white," Donna recalls. "We also chose the wildcat as our mascot as well." On this, Donna adds, "Although we came from different schools and there was a divide, our sports teams had to work together to beat the other teams. Because of this, I formed many strong relationships with the Waymart students."

Donna's favorite memory from high school was during basketball season. "It was deer season and I had gotten a button buck that morning with my dad. Along with that, I scored nineteen points at that night's game against Forest City," she fondly remembers. Donna climbed the social ladder, and her tenacity and intelligence gained her "a position at the top" in many respects. She started out as a basketball cheerleader her freshman year at Lake Ariel, who thirsted for the action on the court. She decided to join the team her sophomore year and became a crucial player of the team, along with, of course, being crowned as our first Homecoming Queen.

Despite this, Donna remained humble. She not only felt surprised at receiving the aforementioned honors, but also felt she was undeserving. "I was surprised. I felt that Susie Merritt should have gotten it." Humility was not often sported by someone as diligent and admirable as herself, which only further proves Donna's qualifications for Homecoming Queen. She was the ideal choice—not because of her beauty or charisma—but because of her talent and kindness. Donna defined what it means to be a Wildcat today. She was prepared to help, respected her peers, had integrity, the dedication of an athlete, and was a truly extraordinary person in every rite. Our very first Homecoming Queen is one our Wildcats should be proud of.

Today, Donna is retired and babysits her grandchildren, feeling blessed to be 'Gooma' to six young grandchildren. Her children and grandchildren are her pride and joy. "My family is truly my life's greatest treasure," She adds. "I still have a deep affection for playing and watching sports. Winning used to be everything, but now it's about building relationships, making people feel part of the group, and helping them reach their full potential. Life goes by too quickly. What I've learned through the years with life's uncertainties is that one must enjoy each moment and focus on taking one step at a time." **WW**



1978 Queen Lisa Carey crowns the 1979 Queen Carol Claus



1981 - Carrie Thorpe, Debbie Christopher, Queen Colleen Siepiela Carmody, Rose Spangenberg, & April McCaffery



1990 - Desiree Vohar, Melanie Roberts, 1989 Queen Stacy Thorpe, 1990 Queen Bonnie Black, Traci Edwards, & Kelly Yander



2019 King Jack McAllister & Queen Kristi Kromko

Western Wayne Welcomes Alumni at Homecoming Game

By Maggie Nagle

Homecoming—our alumni adhere to that title pretty well. Every year, we have Western Wayne graduates come home to us for just one night to play with the family that they once made music with everyday. Sometimes, one of our own band members can even get on the court, or better yet; be voted Queen, like our 2019-20 drum major Kristi Kromko. Three years later, we had the honor of having a few alumni, and our current Chorus director, play with us and offer their thoughts on making music with our band once again on the 50th anniversary of the Western Wayne School District at our Homecoming game on Friday, Sept. 30.

"It was so exciting to be able to play with the band at Homecoming! It's amazing how songs that you haven't played for more than six years come right back to you when you are back in the bleachers," said Mr. Taber Starnes, Western Wayne's current Chorus director and former band student, class of 2016. "I took a lot of pride in the Band during my four years in school, and they continue to make me proud now that I get to work alongside them. Something that I have always loved about Western Wayne is that there seems to be a place for people with many different interests and personalities. It is great to see kids who are excited to come to school every day because of music, art, sports, science, or any subject. Western Wayne has always been a home for kids with many diverse interests, and I hope that that never changes."

Another alum, Andrew Oudshoorn, Class of 2020, returned to his alma mater to play with the marching band. "It felt really nostalgic to play with the band. I've only been an alumni for about three years now but it still feels like being in the marching band was a lifetime ago, so coming back and playing under the football lights once a year is just a feeling that can't be compared to anything else," he stated. "The qualities of Western Wayne that will never change are the culture and the liveliness at the football games, and the hype from the band and the excitement of the crowd which are things that have always remained the same. Western Wayne has a winning and supportive culture that will always be unmatched."

"I felt very happy to be able to play with the band again at homecoming," recalled B Flannery, Class of 2022. "The Western Wayne Band is like a family to me, and seeing all the percussionists from last year play warms my heart as they've grown into strong musicians. The faculty at Western Wayne are very supportive and want to see students grow and become the best that they can, and they always make the school year a lot better." **WW**

THE ARCHIVES: STAR ATHLETES

The September 10, 1972 Edition of the Sunday Times posted an article titled "Western Wayne Gridders Set for First Year." The article states that Western Wayne will run a six game Junior Varsity Schedule for the fall of 1972. The home games were played at the Waymart Field. The schedule listed is as follows: Jeffersonville NY, Montrose, Lakeland, Carbondale, Susquehanna, and Honesdale. The inaugural season of varsity football was played in the fall of 1973.

The First Head Coach of the football team was John Vickers. The first varsity football game played in Western Wayne History was against Montrose on September 16, 1973. They defeated the Montrose Meteors 12-6. The first touchdown scored in school history was by current school board member Gary Enslin when he rammed the ball across the goal line capping a 55 yard drive in the first quarter of the game. In the second quarter Dave Frisk scored on a four yard run. The 1973 Wildcats finished their inaugural season with a record of 2-7.

The stats for the very first varsity game:

- 10 First Downs
- 182 Rushing Yards
- 5 Passes
- 2 Passes Intercepted
- 0 Passing Yards
- 2 Fumbles
- 3 Penalties for a loss of 25 yards
- 5 Punts averaging 20 yards

The Newspapers at the time did not list individual player stats.



1973 - Varsity football team. bottom: Al Hollister, Larry Van Orden, Bob Van Leuven, Duane Swingle, Bob Bianchi, Bob Tyler, Hugh Fitz, Marty McDonnel. Standing: Coach John Vickers, Dave Fisk, Peter Clauss, Jeff Kent, Jim Fitz, Ron Merring, Bill Petsch, Gary Piorkowski, Jeff Howell, Brian Enslin, Mike Diehl, Tom Fries, Tim Shaffer. Gary Enslin not pictured

FOOTBALL RECORDS

- Wildcat Offensive Football Records
- Passing in a Season
- 2014 Scott Walck 139 Completions
- 218 Attempts 2122 Yards 19 TD 11 INT
- Passing in a Career
- 2013-2016 Scott Walck 381 Completions 642 Attempts 5,236 Yards 46 TD 30 INT
- Rushing in a Season
- 1995 Damon Verton
- 303 Attempts 2,390 Yards 27 TD's
- Rushing in a Career
- 1993-1995 Damon Verton 695 Attempts 5,207 Yards 57 TD
- Receiving in a Season
- 2014 Kyle Haines 57 Receptions 1012 Yards 11 TD
- Receiving in a Career
- 2015-2018 Dylan Walck 89 Receptions 1,222 Yards 11 TD

- Season Scoring
- 2019 Zane Janiszewski 30
- Rushing TD, 1 Reception TD, 2 Defensive TD, 1 2-Pt Conversion
- Total 200 Points
- Career Scoring
- 1992-1995 Damon Verton 57
- Rushing TD, 5 Receiving TD, 4 Special Teams TD, 10 2-Pt Conversions Total 416 Points
- Wildcat Football Defensive Records
- Tackles in a Season
- 2014 Brandon Tuite 82 Solo
- Tackles, 32 Assists, 9 Tackles for a Loss, 114 Total Tackles
- Tackles in a Career
- 2017-2020 Zane Janiszewski
- 143 Solo Tackles, 153 Assists, 30 Tackles for a Loss Total 296
- Sacks in a Season
- 2017 Baily Walck 8.5 Sacks

- Sacks in a Career
- 2016-2017 Baily Walck 9 Sacks
- Interceptions in a Season
- 2018 Alex Kuha 5 Interceptions
- Interceptions in a Career
- 2016-2018 Dylan Walk 10 Interceptions
- Wildcat Football Special Teams/ Kicking Records
- PAT-FG Season
- 2019 Jake Shepard 52 PATM 59
- PATA, FGM 1 FGA 1 Long 36 Yards
- Total 55 Points
- PAT-FG Career
- 2017-2019 Jake Shepard 111 PATM
- 131 PATA, 5 FGM 8 FGA, Long 36 Yards Total 126 Points
- Longest Career Field Goal Made
- 2013 Tanner Gillette 37 Yard Field Goal



Courtesy of Shane Grodack

Boys Volleyball

11 Time League Champions – 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1979, 2001, 2002, 2010, 2013, 2014

The 1972 Team has the 1st league championship in Western Wayne History. Jack Chapman was the coach.

All-State Players – Sean Sheridan (2010)

All Region Player of the Year – Matt Henneforth (2021), Tyler Atcavage (2016), Mike Trygar (2013)

League MVP – Matt Henneforth (2021), Tyler Atcavage (2016), Mike Trygar (2013)

500 Career Kills – Matt Henneforth

Girls Volleyball

2019 District Champions

3 Time League Champions – 1994, 2019, 2021

All-State Players – Courtney Roegner (2006), Rebecca Klemovitch (2019)

All Region Player of the Year – Courtney Roegner (2006), Rebecca Klemovitch (2019)

League MVP – Courtney Roegner (2006), Rebecca Carmody (2013), Rebecca Klemovitch (2019), Kaeli Romanowski (2021)

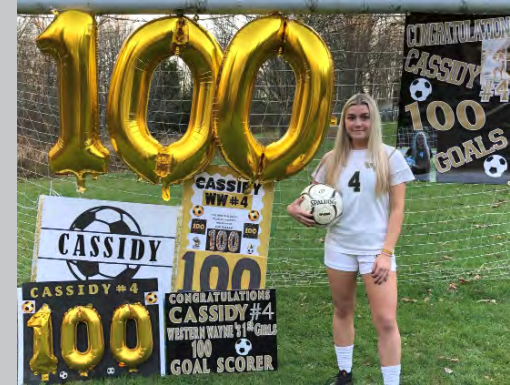
500 Career Kills – Rebecca Klemovitch, Rebecca Carmody

1000 Career Assists – Kaeli Romanowski, Kristin Thorpe

Courtesy of Darren Thorpe



Volleyball All-State Players: On left Sean Sheridan, Courtney Roegner, & Rebecca Klemovitch



Cassidy Asinski—Class of 2021—currently holds the school's soccer record for most goals. She was also named the Lackawanna Interscholastic Athletic Association 2020-21 Athlete of the Year.



Jacob Brink—Class of 2003—holds the record for the boys with a total of 72 goals in his high school soccer career.

Courtesy of Matt Fitzsimmons

Matt Fitzsimmons was the soccer coach for 25 years, retiring in 2021. The Western Wayne boys and girls played on the same team from 1973 to 2003. Starting in 2004, the boys and girls formed separate teams.

Coach Matt Fitzsimmons
159 career wins

Boys Soccer
3x District Champions – 1974, 1983, 1985

4x Division Champions – 1974, 1979, 1985, 2009

All-State (Boys) – Mark Salak (1983) Dave Hopkins (1998) Jason Kromko (2000) Steve Keifer (2003) Danny Fernandez (2009)

Saves in Career – Brian Scott 716 saves (1991-94)

All-State (Girls) – Sydney Fahrenbach (2007) Mary Kate Bateman (2016) Cassidy Asinski (2020)

1990 Seniors - From left: John Rhodes, Paula Malcolm, Stacy Thrope, Aaron Lewis, Mike Fitzpatrick, Penny Rhodes, Steve Salak, Donna Theobald

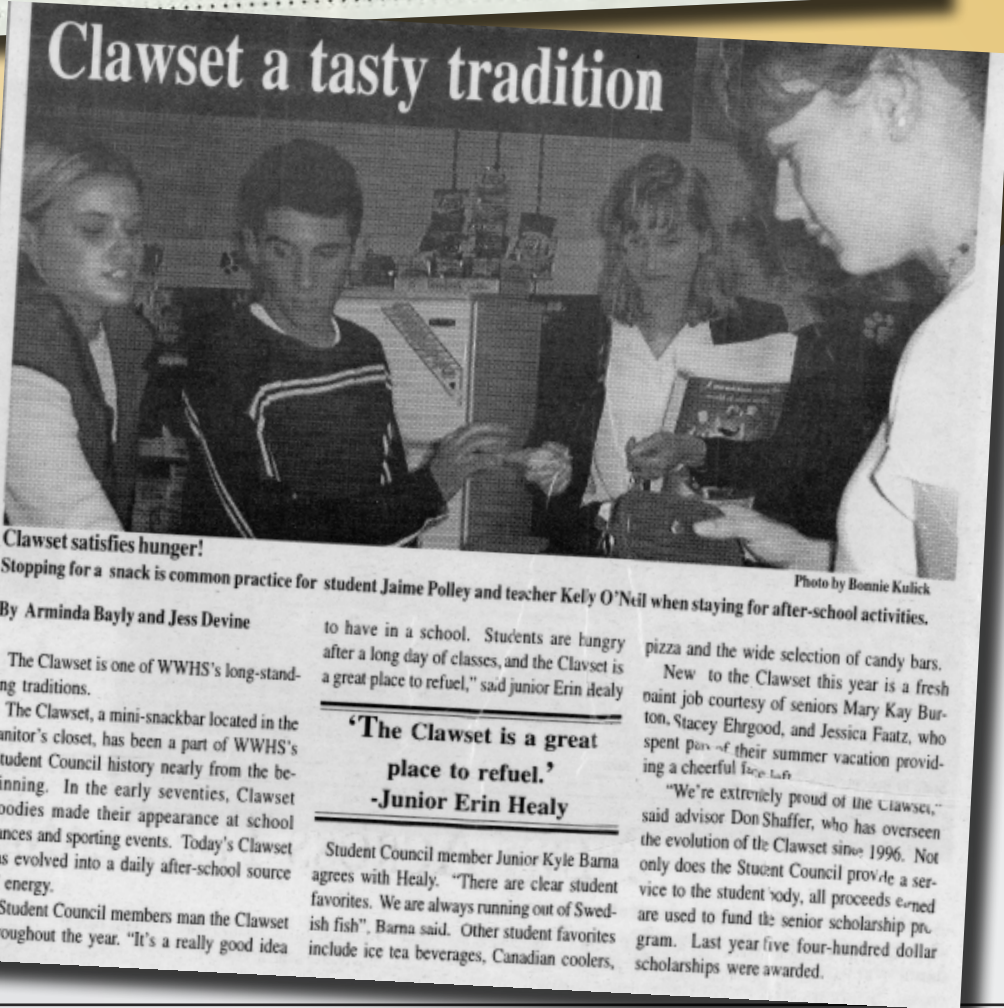


1990 THEN & NOW 2022



2023 Seniors - From left: (Thumbs up: Lucas Putman), Luke Janiszewski, Alexis Pearsall, Kylie Merring, Alex Wallace, Nathan Irvine, McKenzie Laity, Nick Hrosovsky, Anjali de Leon-Bello

THE ARCHIVES: PLANET WILDCAT



Oct. 1999

TEACHER TALK: ALWAYS A WILDCAT

WWHS alumni teachers talk about their alma mater as they reflect on their high school career as a wildcat.

Interviews by Elizabeth Wasylyk

Photography by Gavin Toy

Design by Justin Hayden

English teacher, Mrs. Grace Piconi-Augelli, is a 2000 graduate of Western Wayne. She has been a Wildcat for over 35 years—originally as a kindergarten student and now as a teacher for 17 years. After her years of teaching, she still loves the sense of camaraderie between the teachers. Despite students coming and going, the teachers remain. On this, she says, “Many of us all started working in the district around the same time, so we have grown as professionals together and, in many cases, have become very good friends.” As for her own high school days, Mrs. Piconi recalls her favorite teacher to be Mr. Russo, the librarian. She remembers all of the books that he introduced her to, like one of her favorites, *Catcher in the Rye* and *Slaughterhouse Five*. She shares, “I’m still not sure what he saw in me that made him say, ‘I think you’ll like *Salinger* and *Vonnegut*,’ but he did—and I do!”

Returning to teach, however, was not her first career choice. Mrs. Piconi earned her cosmetology license after graduating, and while working one day, a teacher from Wallenpaupack suggested that she become a teacher. Just a few months later, she became enrolled in Kutztown University’s secondary education/English program and graduated with a 4.0 GPA, while also being honored with delivering the commencement address at graduation along with earning the award of Student Teacher of the Year and English Major of the Year. She is now grateful for that teacher, who “changed the trajectory of my life that day with one complement and one suggestion. THAT is the amazing magic of teaching.” When Mrs. Piconi returned to Western Wayne to teach, it took her a while to adjust to being the teacher rather than the student. On this, she shares, “For about three years, I still called my colleagues Mrs. Stoner, Mr. Rebar, Mr. Reed, Mrs. Tylutki, and Mrs. Morgan. I just could not seem to break the habit of addressing them formally. Western Wayne has always been my home.”



Mr. Justin Collins is a teacher in the business/accounting field here at Western Wayne. Mr. Collins’ favorite part of his job is working with his students. Mr. Collins shares, “As a 1999 Western Wayne graduate and a current member of our community, I feel like I can really relate to our students.” When it comes to his own days in high school, he proudly remembers being a member of the “very talented” basketball team—he even keeps in touch with his former teammates to this day. He also recalls his favorite teacher to be Mr. Rodio, who once taught at the Hamlin Elementary School. He remembers Mr. Rodio was a great teacher, and specifically all the times he went out of his way to spend time with Mr. Collins himself and his classmates. On this, he says, “I think his involvement and encouragement helped so many of us to develop as student athletes.”

Despite his position today, Mr. Collins did not plan on returning to teach when he graduated. His first few years out of college were spent working in the management and finance areas of the business world. Amongst these years, he became one of the coaches for track and field at his alma mater and because of this wonderful experience, Mr. Collins became inspired to return to college to earn a teaching certification. Now, he is in his tenth year of teaching and nineteenth season of coaching the track and field team here at Western Wayne. Upon his return as a teacher, he experienced an overwhelming sense of nostalgia. Mr. Collins says, “I had a very positive experience as a student, and I hope to be a part of making the experience special for current students for years to come.”



2016 graduate, Mr. Taber Starnes, is the current Chorus and Music Theory teacher. Mr. Starnes loves “seeing students find a home in the choir room and finding a love of music” through his position. He remembers his time in school, being taught by Mr. Stedenfeld—the former band director—and Mrs. Ort. He fondly remembers the exceptional impact that the two had on him during school, along with the impact it made on his overall career and life. He shares, “I am proud to be able to work with Mrs. Ort today.”



Returning to Western Wayne as a teacher has been a great experience for him, too. He remembers the excellent music program from his days in high school, and upon his return, was pleased to see that it remained and looks forward to expanding the choral program with more opportunities for students. He has worked with several amazing teachers and conductors—from both high school and college—and shares that, “The way that they created a fun, safe, and musically rich community inspired me to follow in their footsteps to create the same thing for my own students. As a relatively new teacher, I am still learning the ropes, but I am very grateful to be able to teach in my home community.”

Mrs. Colleen Carmody is not only a Family Consumer Science teacher here at Western Wayne, but she is also a member of the 1982 graduating class. In her twenty years here, she has begun the sewing and fashion pathway—since this was established, countless students have gone on to study fashion and design. Along with this, Mrs. Carmody is responsible for initiating and then expanding the CATWALK competition—a school-wide assembly and community fashion show featuring students from her fashion and sewing classes. She is the Wellness Chairperson, who wrote the first Wellness Policy in 2004.

When Mrs. Carmody reflects on her own days as a student Wildcat, she fondly remembers her senior year—specifically the time she turned Mr. Falonk’s office upside down as a senior prank and being crowned the 1981 Homecoming Queen. She also thinks back on her Latin teacher, Mr. Margotta, who challenged them with learning the Latin language. One of the memories of him that sticks with her today is “His famous quotes, ‘Veni vidi vici’ and ‘Remember, kids; Rome never fell!’”

Prior to becoming a teacher, Mrs. Carmody pursued a career in the medical field and spent the majority of her time with unhealthy people, along with many weekends and holidays in pediatric and Intensive Care patients in acute care. After receiving her Master’s degree, she decided to go into teaching, with the focus of informing teenagers about proper nutrition and health. Her job in the FCS department here created a new avenue for her to pursue: teaching sewing and construction classes. Since she grew up with many seamstresses in her life, this past knowledge prepared her to begin the sewing program.

Her return to Western Wayne as a teacher was, as she recalls, both “exciting and intimidating.” Initially, she felt that working with Mrs. Lamberton and Mrs. Vitovsky was probably the most challenging aspect of returning. On this, she says, “I was raised to respect my teachers and you did not test their positions. Working side by side with your teachers is awkward at first because you view them as authority figures—and often still do—and not necessarily as colleagues or equals.”

Now an inspiring veteran teacher herself, Mrs. Carmody’ favorite aspect of her job is spending time with students and watching them grow throughout the years. She enjoys students’ perspectives and stories, which she says keeps her “feeling young.” Along with this, she feels proud to have had the opportunity of expanding the sewing program at Western Wayne despite all of the challenges this process has presented. Because of this program, numerous students have found their passion for fashion, design, and sewing, leading them to enter post secondary programs to study these concepts and later secure jobs in the textile industry. The biggest joy she draws from her career, however, is the community she is surrounded by at Western Wayne. She says, “I enjoy knowing the school is part of my community—that the students I teach and help are past students’ children, neighbors, friends’ children or relatives; and by being a teacher, I am supporting their growth and achievements each day.”



UPCOMING EVENTS: JOIN US!

Western Wayne Drama Club Seeking Musical Alumni Students for Cabaret!

The Western Wayne Drama Club will host a Cabaret Night the evening of Saturday, January 7, in the high school auditorium in celebration of Western Wayne's 50th Anniversary. Any alumni who participated in musicals at Western Wayne is invited to participate in the event. You can sing a song from one of your favorite shows or help our stage crew. The community is invited to the event as well! If you are interested in participating, please [click here to register](#) for the event.

We would like to have registration complete to help us further plan by December 16th. Any questions, please email Mrs. Jessica McLaughlin at jmclau@wwsd.io We look forward to seeing you back up on stage in 2023!

Come and join the Western Wayne Drama Club at the Western Wayne High School Cafeteria on the evening of Friday, Dec. 9, to enjoy a holiday movie, refreshments, and basket raffles. We encourage you to wear school-appropriate holiday attire such as holiday sweaters and or pajamas. Doors for the event open at 6:30 p.m. with the movie beginning at 7 p.m. Cost is only \$1 per person. We welcome families to attend! All elementary students must be accompanied by an adult. No advance tickets needed. Hope to see you on December 9 to celebrate the holiday early with the Western Wayne Drama Club. Alumni are also encouraged to attend!

Alumni, Nick Antidormi from the Class of 2017 will have his annual St. Nick's Christmas Display starting December 3rd through the holidays. Born on Christmas day, Nick shares his joy of Christmas by offering the public free entry to view his lights and decorations. Hours: 6-9 p.m. Weather permitting
53 Cemetery Road, Waymart, PA 18472
Donations appreciated.

DID YOU KNOW? Class of 2000

Has the largest number of alumni who returned to work at Western Wayne. Those ten include: Jessica Faatz Agnello, Grace Piconi Augelli, Christy Collins Driscoll, Paul Gregorski, Kenny Hemmler, Colleen Corrigan Kloss, Chrissy Baldwin McClure, Tim McClure, Katie Shemanski Moro, Sarah Biggs Wood.

Another 10+ graduates from the Class of 2000 work at other surrounding districts.

"Oh, there's no place like home for the holidays"... which is why all Western Wayne Band alumni are invited to play in our Christmas Concert! The songs that will include our alumni are *A Christmas Festival* and *Sleigh Ride*, both arranged by Leroy Anderson. The concert will be held on Friday, December 16th, in the Western Wayne High School Auditorium. Please stay tuned for any upcoming information, and fill out the [Google Form](#) so we know what you're playing! Happy Holidays and we hope to see you there!

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