

BEHIND THE WALL

GRIFFIN GIRLS MAKE HISTORY

By: Blake Liberi

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- Griffin Girls make it to the Section VII Championship for the first time ever
- Juniors and Seniors continue winning ways on Halloween
- FBLA and Quizbowl programs resume
- What you need to know about Down Syndrome
- An inside look at our Student Council
- Westport hosts middle school All County



For the first time ever, our very own Griffin Girl's Varsity soccer team made it to the section VII finals. The potential to take the Section throne this year was at its highest, and it started with a home game against Johnsbury. Taylor Gough sparked the Griffins to jump out to a 1-0 lead, but with many other opportunities, and overpowering in shots, it ended 1-0, and they moved on to face the #1 seed Chazy. After regulation, Taylor Gough scored twice, but Chazy answered with two of their own to take it to overtime 2-2. Overtime ended with the same result, and the Griffins took Chazy to penalties, looking to repeat what the Griffin Boys' did in the 2015 Section VII Semi-Finals. And it happened. The Griffins defeated Chazy



3-2 in penalties to move on to the Section Finals against the despised, yet menacing, Moriah Vikings. On a beautiful, windy, afternoon in Plattsburgh, Ellie Storey scored 3 goals, all from long range, helping the Griffins jump out to a 3-1 lead over the Vikings. During the sec-

ond half, Moriah, with the wind at their backs, came back to win the Section VII Class D Title. Next year, with the majority of the team being seniors this year, it will look to be a rebuilding year for the Griffins.

JUNIORS AND SENIORS WIN BIG; SOPHOMORES AND FRESHMAN COME UP SHORT

By: Hudson Stephens

Controversy and complaints can be heard throughout the Westport hallways following a battle of the ages at the 2017 Halloween contest. The Junior's, having never lost the theme contest, and hoping to continue their streak with

what they thought was their best idea yet, zombies, were dethroned by the Seniors who dressed as "senior citizens." Despite a full pre-show makeup session and a completely choreographed rendition of "Thriller," the class was stripped of their

title in an almost nonchalant manner. Nonetheless, the ambitious Juniors got their revenge in the skit category, capitalizing on big performances from wildcard actors such as Melissa Place and Will Napper.

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“Next year, they will look to shock the section, as they are looking for a bounce-back year.”

Griffins Boys Wrap Up By: Blake Liberi

This year for our Boys was a rebuilding year, for sure, but they will take this season as a learning experience. With a young team lead by Evan George, first year coach, they went into the Section quarterfinals playing at Willsboro for the 4th time this season. Willsboro jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first half, but the Griffins charged back with 2 goals from Hudson Stephens and Blake Liberi. Going into overtime, the Griffins were determined to keep their season alive, but it ended in

a 3-2 loss for the Griffins. Next year, they will look to shock the section, as they are looking for a bounce-back year.



Senior goal keeper Carter Smith clears the ball against Willsboro

FBLA Travels to Lake George for First Conference

By: Peter Vaiciulis

Thursday, October 26th marked the commencement of Westport's 2017 FBLA season. A number of FBLA's, headed by none other than English teacher, Mrs. Brankman, and presided by yours truly, Peter Vaiciulis.

The congress itself took place in a hotel located near Lake George, and featured a keynote speaker, followed by presentations formed by students of other participating schools.

The keynote speaker was a businesswoman local to the Lake George area.

She gave a riveting speech based on a number of personal stories leading to important lessons in the realm of business. Undoubtedly her speech was entertaining, as many people could be heard cackling at various points in her speech. The real take-away though was not her jokes, but the insight into life as a business woman.

The next speakers spoke on a wider array of topics, including (but not limited to): the road to state and national FBLA competition, how to dress properly in your workplace, and how to

perform well in an interview. The latter half of these topics were introduced by students from two different schools. All of these were presented via some form of powerpoint, and the student-produced interpretations included the hit game "Kahoot!", a parody of Jeopardy where you can create the questions and have as many participants as you'd like.

The day wrapped up with a game where teams attempted to put on business attire as fast as possible. The teams were combined from all of the participating schools and each fought hard to achieve victory. A great way to lament the day.



2017 High School Halloween Contest (Continued)

By: Hudson Stephens

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The seniors appeared understandably disappointed, as they'd won the prestigious skit award for the past two years. In their defense, it is possible that they didn't have as much of a chance in winning the skit, as they'd won the theme which had been announced earlier. The sophomore's theme, of which they each dressed up as a different holiday, was rumored to have been incorrectly omitted, as their participation was supposedly calculated incorrectly. Student Council advisor, Mrs. Phillips, was reluctant to speak on the matter, but eventually stated that a decision had been made by the judges, before they were informed that the sophomores had full participation. Recently Mr. Meyer elaborated on the subject, claiming that Mrs. Phillips was reluctant to speak because "she is a professional," but that he had in fact been notified of the error, but elected to not conduct a revote because the decision had already been made and he "didn't think it would change anything." The freshman, on the other hand, in short term, did not exactly perform to potential. In an interview with Class President Tomasi Vaiciulis, he admitted that both their theme of "Shrek," which would have been unknown had he not explicitly told me, and their skit which was apparently "Fashion Through the Ages," were

"not executed well." In the future Tomasi plans to actually come up with a skit that isn't made the day before." The seniors and the juniors have each won an award in at least one category for the past three years. Student Council Vice President and involved member of the senior class Abby Mero, commented on the somewhat infamous rivalry, "We do good, they do good, it's always back and forth. It's been a nice challenge. I won't miss it." Student Council President and senior class co-scriptwriter (partnered with Riley Martin) Malynnda Lobdell, also commented on the rivalry, "I'll miss it a lot. Especially beating the juniors. Besides this year, I think all of the judges' decisions have been correct. The juniors have deserved some of what they got, because I suppose they worked hard." Junior class Treasurer Will Napper described the rivalry as so,

"We are two classes, both highly competitive, so naturally we'll butt heads sometimes. It's all in good fun." Junior Secretary Peter Vaiciulis, however, was less apathetic in his description of the rivalry, "Nurtured by egoism, realized by incomparable results, the juniors and the seniors have long sought to best one another." It's been a trying battle, with mighty warriors and daring attempts on both sides. This year finally marks the end of this bitter rivalry, a rivalry that will live in infamy, and will be difficult to ever contest. Next year, the Juniors will search for an opponent comparable to the seniors, anyone that could make their final Halloween appearance a competitive one.

"Nurtured by egoism, realized by incomparable results, the juniors and the seniors have long sought to best one another."



Junior Melissa Place performs in the Class of 2019's award winning skit



Seniors Malynnda Lobdell and Kaleigh Lamotte take the floor in their award winning skit "senior citizens"

Not All Sports Have Balls

By: Maggie Ploufe

As the soccer and cross country fall sports have come to an end, Westport's Quizbowl team managed by Mrs. Phillips, whose existence and progress is often forgotten about, continues to battle for scholastic glory against other schools across the region. Here's the inside scoop on this year's Quizbowl season from Westport Central's very own William Napper. Will has been an annual member of Quizbowl for two years and enjoys it immensely. When asked what he loves most about it, he replied: "I like being the only person who knows random stuff, like people wonder how or why I know some

things, which I find quite flattering!"

He also loves going to the Burlington tournament, which he describes as competitive but also fun for everyone because there is no elimination. If you win, you advance higher in the bracket, but if you lose, you just go down and play in the loser's bracket. One of the team's biggest wins he recalls, was at the Burlington tournament. "The other team had only answered one question right the entire time. It was pretty darn close to a shutout!" says Will enthusiastically. The team practices every week

in attempt to reach their goal of going to nationals. "It's the pipe dream," says Will, "although our chance of making it this year is very slim, so our hope is to finish in the top four or five." However, the Quizbowl team expresses a need for more kids who can be confident and come to the meets. When asked if he recommended that other kids join Quizbowl, Will's answer was an immediate yes. "The more people that join, the better. With all of our knowledge put together we can both accomplish and learn so much more."

Down Syndrome

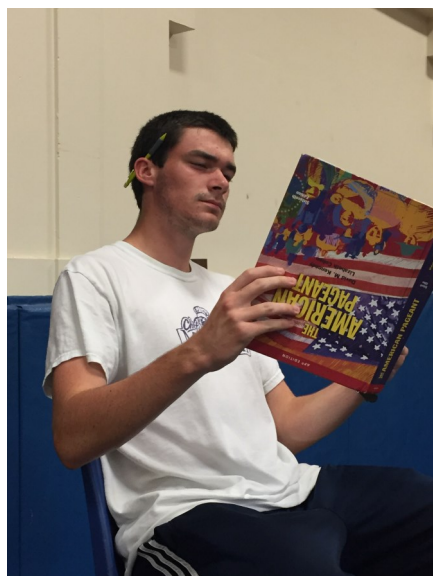
By: Sofie Fiegl

"Do not do everything for a person with Down Syndrome, because they like to do things themselves, just like people without Down Syndrome do."

Last month, October, was Down Syndrome Awareness Month. Down Syndrome is a genetic condition where the muscles of the person with Down Syndrome will take longer to develop. This is called muscle hypotonia. Hypotonia is decreased muscle tone. This is caused by a third copy of chromosome 21. Usually, people only have two chromosomes in each pair. Chromosomes are threadlike structures that are in every cell of the human body. There are two pairs of 22 chromosomes. A person without Down Syndrome will have 46 chromosomes, while a person with Down Syndrome will have 47. Mrs. Welch, our first grade teacher and mother of a child with Down Syn-

drome, came to different classes during October, talking about Down Syndrome and how it's caused. One out of every 700 kids are born with Down Syndrome. According to Mrs. Welch, for people with Down Syndrome, talking is like speaking with a mouth full of marshmallows. Down Syndrome also makes it harder for people to focus, remember things, and it takes them longer to learn things. Also according to Mrs. Welch, for people with Down Syndrome, writing is like writing with socks on your hands. There are different types of Down Syndrome, some worse than others. People with Down Syndrome learn mostly by copying other people's actions or

words. When you speak with someone with Down Syndrome, make sure you speak slowly, so they can understand you better. It will take about 10 seconds for them to remember you, so wait 10 seconds after you introduce yourself. National Down Syndrome Day is on March 21st, or 3/21. This is the date because Down Syndrome is caused by a 3rd copy of the 21st chromosome. Even if they have Down Syndrome, people are no different from those without it, so don't treat them any differently. People with Down Syndrome like to be treated like people without it. Do not do everything for a person with Down syndrome, because they like to do things themselves, just like people without Down Syndrome do.



Survey Raises Questions

By: Annette Stephens

Recently there has been a lot of talk about Westport's student government. There have been many complaints by the student body and curiously, also by the student council members. To get to the bottom of these complaints and rumors, I have interviewed Student Council members, Westport students from grades 8-12, and Student Council advisor Mrs. Phillips. From these three parties I received very different answers. The most common theme when speaking of Westport's Student Council was the idea that they do virtually nothing. In fact, eighteen out of the eighteen students interviewed, including four Student Council members, said that our student government was unsuccessful and ineffective.

Mrs. Phillips, however, recognized this theme and said that the biggest misconception about Student Council is that you can bring up an issue or suggest something and have it done in 25 minutes, but there are procedures to follow." This is supposedly the reason that nothing appears to get done. "Appears" is the key word here because Mrs. Phillips was able to provide a substantial list of things they do, not only for the school but for the community too. Phillips says Student Council has donated to Project Wee Care, the SPCA, and Hokulea. They also helped organize and pay for the breakfast when the World

War II veterans came a couple of years ago, and have helped put together Westport's clean up days. Student Council members have also been asked to be student representatives on the Student Handbook revision committee, the merger study committee and the wellness committee. What struck me as odd after seeing this list of duties, was that the members of Student Council did not think that they got much done. The fact that the members of Student Council do not feel like they get anything done is curious, and makes one think that there are different viewpoints as to what success and accomplishment look like within the Council. Many of the things listed above do not benefit the students, and most of them took place in the past.

It appears as though the members of Student Council are looking for more school activities, like a spirit week, or pep rallies. One member's goal was to get the students more involved. Another member's was to make progress and satisfy the students. These students seem to be proactive and desire progress, and success, so what is standing in their way? By putting together small details and hints such as the general feeling that they have no power, and that some of them can see more coming their way in the future, as well as Phillips dancing around the question "how much power do the



students have?" one can assume that ideas hit a roadblock somewhere in the adult end of things. According to student council members, there was even distress when President Malynda Lobdell held her own meeting.

Another common set back is the past. According to members, many ideas get shut down due to something that went wrong before most of us were even born. To be proactive about the lack of student government success instead of just complaining about it, students were asked to pitch ideas as to what they could do. Some of the requests included spirit week, pep rallies, longer lunches, a vending machine, senior class lounge, "something notable", something that helps the students, and Kaiden Sears "would like something done for me specifically;" for the Student Council members reading this, feel free to discard that one. Other students were more blunt with replies such as "anything" and "actually make us happy." To offset these students, there were other, more thoughtful students who inquired to what exactly Student Council could do.

The question we ask ourselves now, is "where do we go from here?" We've addressed the problem, and searched for answers, but how do we fix it? How do we use Student Council to their full potential? And what is their full potential?

Westport Central is full of students, teachers and administrators all genuinely happy to help make Westport a better place. That's what makes it such an extraordinary school and contagious environment. What we can learn from all of this is that maybe we need some change, and maybe instead of complaining about nothing getting done, we should get off of our chairs and do something about it. We don't need to put it all on student council's shoulders, we need to be part of the change too.

All County At Westport

By: Victoria Cole



Malynda Lobdell



Mr. Meyer



Olivia Hart

On October 26th, as I was traveling the halls to get to my classes, I was able to hear students from Westport, Crown Point, Elizabethtown, Moriah, and other local schools, performing on a variety of instruments in band and orchestra and singing beautiful songs in chorus. Our own chorus teacher, Mrs. Nelson, was conducting for chorus and had the opportunity to meet and work with talented students from all the different schools. This year, All County was hosted by our very own Westport Central School, and I was able to see friends, some from outside of school, while volunteering at the concession stand. In the days following All County, I was able to interview a few of those friends on their experience. Here's their take on their All County experience.

Eleanor Harmon, from Crown Point Central School, and friend from dance class, had this to say.

Victoria: "Did you like seeing familiar faces?"

Eleanor: "It was good to see you again, you know, outside of dance. Getting to bond with others was nice, too."

"Did you like the songs they gave you?"

"Yes. The Russian Christmas song was really fun to play."

"How was your All County experience at Westport this year?"

"It is certainly an experience I will never forget. Your cafeteria is huge compared to ours. I loved the brownies they served; they were so good."

Next was Kassidy Brack, Westport Central School, a friend and classmate.

Victoria: "Was this your first experience in orchestra?"

Kassidy: "Yes."

"Would you go back again if asked?"

"Yes, it was really fun and was a great experience for me since I've never done it before."

"Did you like the conductor?"

"Yes, she was amazing. I liked that the conductor went at an easy tempo and stopped and explained the music when she needed to."

Another friend and fellow classmate at Westport Central School, Abigail Carlson, had a different opinion on the conductor's conducting.

Victoria: "Did you like the conductor?"

Abigail: "Yes, she was really nice but I wish she could've conducted a little faster. I didn't like playing it slow."

"How were the long practices?"

"Not that bad, other than it made my throat hurt since I played for about two hours straight."

Overall, All County was a great experience for these young performers to display their talents and meet new people. As a fellow musician, I cannot wait until next fall and the next All County Day.



The All County Orchestra