

# BEHIND THE WALL



## CLASS OF 2018 CHECKS OFF SENIOR PLAY

By: Peter Vaiciulis

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Senior Play	1
WPTSO Fun Run	2
An Early Christmas	3
Honors Classes	3 & 4
Our Carbon Footprint	5
Varsity Basketball	6 & 7
Financial Aid	8

### Special points of interest:

- Class of 2019 completes their senior play
- WPTSO Fun Run is executed smoothly
- A sad Christmas story
- What's happening with Honors courses
- How big is our carbon footprint?
- An intro to our Varsity Basketball teams
- All you need to know about financial aid



Every year at Westport Central School, the senior class, as part of their fundraising schemes, puts on a play commonly referred to as the senior "play". This year was no exception to that rule. The class of 2018 decided to pool its performance talent for a run at the production "Buffy the Vampire Slayer".

If you were one of the bunch that did not have the fortune of viewing the senior play, I will give you a quick synopsis. Buffy is a teenage cheerleader (female), who happens to be a sleeper agent of the sort that kill vampires. Meric is a woman who is very old and enlightens Buffy on the rapture that is upon them (vampires are taking over her town and will move onto the world afterwards). While it is difficult to convince Buffy to abandon her normal life, she eventually succumbs to Meric's advances, and becomes the vampire slayer that she was made to be. In the end, Meric is laid to rest, but a resourceful Buffy ends up killing the vampire queen by stabbing her through the heart with a pencil.

The play was undoubtedly a sight to behold in many respects. I viewed the performance amongst the throng of onlookers and can attest to its unforgeability, and moments of scattered laughter. I attended the play on Saturday and was informed



by a fellow viewer, much to my incredulity, that the play was much more well received on Saturday than on Friday. There was much that I myself gleaned about the world of performance through my own first-hand viewing of the play, and others seemed to feel the same way. Following is a collection of selected responses by high-schoolers involved in the play at Westport Central School who wished to remain anonymous.

What sort of thoughts did you harbor about the play? "It was put well together, we had some minor bumps but we recovered well." What was your favorite scene or the best part of the play in your opinion? "Riley and Ellie and their Zeff and Pike scene. I thought that was the funniest one. The fights were also well choreographed, we put a lot of work into them." What parts of the play did you not like?

"There were some minor mixups on scening but that was about all that we did wrong." As an actor what was your favorite part of putting together the play? "I liked the dance scene, the improvisation - we had to do a dance on the fly."

As you can tell, this senior play was very well received to some, and has cemented itself firmly as the best school play that I have seen this year. I, and many others' are practically frothing at the mouth at the next chance we will have to witness a senior play.



***“The run proved successful, though attendance was unfortunately lower than the year before***



***Science teacher Mr. Fiegl takes second place over-***  
***all***

## **2017 WPTSO Fun Run: Costin, Shaw Finish Atop Student Competitors**

**By: Hudson Stephens**

The Westport Parent Teacher Student Organization completed their 6th annual fun run on Saturday, November 17th, despite dreary skies and an uncomfortably low temperature. WPTSO president Jess Storey conducted the event seamlessly with the help of fellow members and a dedicated group of student volunteers. Jared Whalen took first place overall with a time of 19:53 followed closely by our very own

Mr. Fiegl, who, despite playing a soccer game in Plattsburgh at 10:15 the night before, finished second overall with a time of 20:41. Boys Varsity soccer coach Evan

George capped off the top 3 with a 22:40 performance. Former Westport student and son of science teacher Mrs. Loher, 10 year old Henry, deserves an honorable mention having finished fourth overall with an impressive time of 23:22. Despite his youth, Henry defeated every student runner at Westport, including a number of track and cross country participants, as well as all but 3 adults. Amongst

some 25 student runners, Freshman Leanna Costin and eighth grader Thea Shaw finished at the top with a time of 23:27, claiming the ages 11-14 female



***Thea Shaw and Leanna Costin***

title. Eighth Grader Jameson Fiegl won the male side of the 11-14 group with a time of 25:46 while Freshman Walter Moore won the male 15-18 with a 24:10. Senior Taylor Gough led the female side of the 15-18 group with a 26:09 finish. The run proved successful, though attendance was

unfortunately lower than the year before. Only five faculty members made an appearance at the event, not including the janitors on duty. A bit of a discouraging

number to the WPTSO, who, despite recognizing the many hours faculty members already spend at school during the week, and the dismal weather along with pre-existing commitments and last minute conflicts, would have liked to see a higher faculty participation rate. According to inside sources, there was talk of changing the date at the monthly WPTSO meeting following the fun run to an earlier weekend next year. One concern was that this year's sen-

ior play had played a part in stifling attendance, so moving the run into early November or late October could prove beneficial. Regardless of what they decide to do, they should know how appreciative we, as a student body, are towards their efforts, and the efforts of everyone who graciously supports them.

## An Early Christmas

By: Victoria Cole

All nine year old Jacob Thompson wanted for his last Christmas was Christmas cards. In February 2014, when he was only five years old, he was diagnosed with stage 4 high-risk Neuroblastoma. The treatments did not help, and in October 2017, the doctors said he only had about a month to live and was probably not going to make it to Christmas.

Jacob's wish for Christmas

this year was for people to celebrate with him by sending him cards. He also wanted people to sing Christmas carols and post them to the hospital Facebook page. Jacob did get his wish and, as of early November, he had received thousands of Christmas cards and was able to celebrate Christmas early with his family.

Sadly, Jacob has lost his courageous battle and passed away on November

19, 2017. Jacob lived in Saco, Maine and Christmas was his favorite holiday and penguins were his favorite animal. Some students at Westport Central School were taking part in Jacob's Christmas wish during their study halls and art classes by making cards for him. Mrs. Matthews, our art teacher, still plans to send the student's cards. Our sympathies go out to Jacob's family and friends this holiday season.



## What's Up With Honors

By: Maggie Plouffe

Last year, the idea of providing students the opportunity to further expand their education by implementing honors assignments to those that were up for the challenge, was discussed by several faculty and staff members in our high school. Since the idea was so new, there were many questions as to how teachers were going to offer honors classes, and/ or provide an individual curriculum that best suits their honors students.

This year, teachers have worked together to refine and expand the honors program, and have held a meeting to make sure everyone is on the same page. The honors program is designed to be a rigorous academic challenge to better prepare stu-

dents who are considering college in their future, and in that, holds students accountable for producing advanced academic levels of work. So far current opportunity to take honors only appears in English 9-11, Global Studies 2, U.S. History, High School Band, and Earth Science, but are working to spread to other classes in the future as well.

In an interview with Mrs. Loher who is teaching Earth Science Honors this year, she discussed her trial and error processes with setting up her class's honors program and finding the right balance. "In the beginning of the year, I set up the honors so that it was more open-ended and kids could do projects on what they were interested in," says Mrs.

Loher. "But since there was a lack of structure, I think the students got kind of confused on what to do and what would and wouldn't qualify as honors-level work." To fix this problem, Mrs. Loher discussed how she was going to still give the students a choice of what they wanted to do for the project, but make the students individual rubrics to guide them, so that there will be less confusion. "I also want to make sure that the honors projects will heighten the kids learning, and not act as just busy work." Explained Mrs. Loher.

So far, roughly thirty-six students are enrolled in honors classes this year, and were sent a letter that stated a list of commitments that honors students are  
(Continued pg 4)

***"This year, teachers have worked together to refine and expand the honors program, and have held a meeting to make sure everyone is on the same page."***



## Honors (continued)

By: Maggie Ploufe

(continued from pg 3)

expected to follow through on, such as submitting work that is completed on time, that is well-organized, well written, and includes in-depth analyses. The teachers also agreed that the honors assignments are to be more independent work for the students, in that the teachers will not constantly check up on student's work progress so that students can learn on their own how to best manage their time.

Since the quality of work is

expected to be much higher, these students were also warned in the letter that they will be graded harder, and will most likely receive grades that might be lower, or grades that they are not used to.

Some students have also found that enrolling in more than one or two honors classes is just not the right fit for them, and were given the opportunity to drop honors classes. However, in an interview with our guid-

ance counselor, Mrs. Tracey Cross-Baker, she discusses the benefits of taking honors courses and how it can affect your future college application processes and future opportunities. "Colleges like to see that you've pushed yourself in high school," said Mrs. Cross-Baker. "And more often than not, a lower grade with honors credit is more valuable in the colleges' eyes than a good grade in one of your normal classes." As far as GPA goes, however, she explains that as an honors student, you have to "anticipate

some type of agreement on how your GPA will be affected, and to base your further steps in honors on that agreement."

In the future there also is talk of implementing requirements for students to join honors, such as teacher recommendations and/or a minimum GPA. And in the words of Mrs. Tracey Cross-Baker, the faculty and staff will be working on the honors program to "tighten it up" and "add challenges" to it, as it is still a work in progress.

# 2017 DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	<u>2</u> Christmas in Westport
3	4 Boys J/V vs Beekmantown	5 GJ/BM @ ELCS GM/GV vs Chazy K-6 Elementary Concert 6PM	6 Boys M/V @Chazy Girls JV vs AVCS Merger meeting 6PM ELCS	7 Girls M/V @ Willsboro	8 Boys M/J/V vs Willsboro	<u>9</u>
10	11 WPTSO Book Fair Winter music concert 6PM Bulles Auditorium	12 WPTSO Book Fair Girls M/V vs Keene	13 WPTSO Book Fair Boys M/V @ Keene Queensbury Quiz-bowl	14 WPTSO Book Fair GV @ Johnsbury BOE meeting 6pm, Library	15 End of 15 weeks Boys M/V vs Etown	<u>16</u>
17	18 BJ/GJ vs SLCS WPTSO meeting 3pm Library	19 Girls M/V vs Seton Girls J V@ LPCS	20 Boys M/V @ Seton	21 Girl M/J/V @Lake Placid	22	<u>23</u>
24	25	26	27 Girls V vs Moriah @ Ticonderoga	28 Girls V@ Ticonderoga	29	<u>30</u>
31						

# The Footprints We Leave

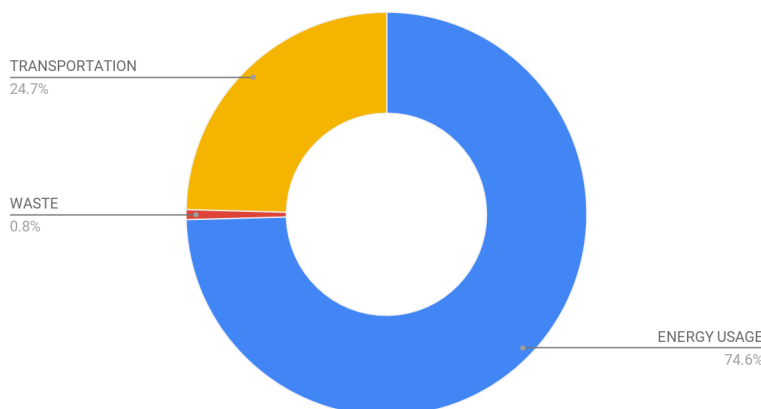
By: Annette Stephens

One of the world's most pressing issues today is climate change. It is a global concern and reminds us that we all share a home, that we are all connected. To Westport, climate change means less snow, and absence of a "closed lake". When Lake Champlain completely freezes over it is referred to as "closed." From 1816 to 1931 there were only two winters when the lake did not close. For the majority of Westport's history, the lake not freezing has been an abnormality, but now it is a special occurrence for the lake to close. In the last nine years, the lake has frozen over a mere two times. This is scientifically credited to global warming world wide. To us this means green Christmas' and an open lake; to other regions this means rising sea levels, stronger storms, destruction of ecosystems, and the extinction of species. To understand our role better, I calculated Westport Central's carbon footprint. Our carbon footprint is the amount of carbon and other greenhouse gases we emit into the atmosphere. The larger the carbon footprint a group has, the more it adds to climate change.

To discover our school's footprint, data was gathered and inserted into bp's (British Petroleum's) interactive carbon calculator. The required information included Westport's enrollment, square footage, energy usage, waste, and trans-

portation. Thanks to the Atwell's employed at our school, and a short survey, I obtained these numbers. As a whole, we produce 661 tons of carbon dioxide yearly. Four-hundred ninety-three of these tons come from the energy we use; this includes electricity, gas, heating oil, and propane. One-hundred sixty-three tons were credited to transportation. While it is evident that this data is not exact since a survey was not collected for every student and staff member, that number is not too far off. While Westport runs three buses to provide transportation for students, most faculty and students arrive to the building via car. This selection of wheels is responsible for many tons of carbon dioxide, but there are students who carpool, walk and ride the bus, to save the Earth bit by bit. Due to our long, chilly winters, walking can prove challenging quite often, but I have noticed there are quite a few more people who walk home, than who walk to school; this could be due to the lack of ability to get out the door earlier, or it could have something to do with the cooler temperatures during those early hours. The positive side of this calculation is the discovery that Westport only produces 5 tons of waste per year. Compared to other schools, this is a very small amount; however, we are also miniscule compared to several other schools. The next step is to reduce our

Carbon Footprint Breakdown



tonnage.

At the beginning of November a group of five Westport students, myself included, went to the Adirondack Youth Climate Summit at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake. Here we met with scientists and climate activists, as well as other high school and college students to discuss what we can do to "save the world." We went to workshops of all sorts about climate change focusing on how to reduce human's effect, communicate it, and learn about it. At the end of the second day we designed a climate action plan for our school. This plan included three plans to reduce our carbon footprint. While work on these, there are things you can do to help too. If you want to help, but do not know what to do, here are some ideas: save paper by only printing your final draft, and printing on

both sides; ask Linda in the cafeteria about running your food scraps through the garbage disposal rather than throwing it away; carpool, bike, ride the bus or walk to school; and recycle any papers or cardboard in the classroom bins, as well as in the Casella bins alongside any disposable bottles, cans and milk cartons. In the words of Dr. Curt Stager of Paul Smith's college, "It's not just our lives, or our kids, or grandkids, or grandkids grandkids grandkids lives, it's thousands of years we are polluting." Keep this in mind as you go about your daily routine, and think about how you can help preserve our beautiful planet. We are the ones causing the problem, so we need to be the ones to fix it.

## VARSITY TEAMS TRANSITION INTO BASKETBALL SEASON

By: Blake Liberi

### BOYS' VARSITY

#### ROSTER:

Riley Martin - Senior

Craig Cumber - Senior

Carter Smith - Senior

Kyle Conley - Senior

Hudson Stephens - Junior

Will Napper - Junior

Blake Liberi - Sophomore

Matthew Pribble - Sophomore

McKenzie Stephens - Sophomore

This year's Boys' varsity basketball team will look to dominate the court, even after losing 4 seniors. Many sources around the league conclude that Westport could be in for a rebuilding year, but our Eagles will look to fight past the scrutiny, and finish out as one of the top teams in the league. Ike Tyler, along with Barry Morrison, and veteran basketball coach Hokie McKinley, will lead the Eagles as their coaching staff. Starting down low, Riley Martin, Senior, will look to control the post, and is joined by Junior Will Napper. Junior Hudson Stephens, who will

run the point guard position, is accompanied on the wings by Carter Smith, Senior, and Blake Liberi, Sophomore. As the season kicks off on November 29, our Eagles can start the season off with a win against our school's rival, the Elizabethtown-Lewis Lions.

***"Ike Tyler, along with Barry Morrison, and veteran basketball coach Hokie McKinley, will lead the Eagle's coaching staff."***



*Senior Riley Martin*

## GIRLS' VARSITY

## ROSTER:

Hannah Schwoebel - Senior

Ellie Storey - Senior

Lizzie Stephens - Senior

Taylor Gough - Senior

Abigail Mero - Senior

Malynda Lobdell - Senior

Kaleigh LaMotte - Senior

Maggie Ploufe - Sophomore

Annette Stephens - Sophomore

Rachel Storey - 8th Grade



*Senior Hannah Schwoebel*

After a year of being the Lady Griffins, the Girls' Varsity team has come back to Westport, as Elizabethtown has currently stepped away from Girls' basketball. Bradley Rascoe will return as head coach, and Ron Mitchell also makes a return as assistant coach. This dynamic duo will look to lead this team to a deep run in sectionals, as they feel quite confident with their chances at a Section title. Leading the way for the Eagles is reigning League MVP, 5-year vet, Hannah Schwoebel, Senior, who looks to defend her MVP status. Running the point for our Eagles is 8th grader Rachel

Storey, who is coming off a successful modified season, and is joined by her sister, Ellie Storey as well as Taylor Gough, Senior, Lizzie Stephens, Senior. After last year's shocking loss to Bolton in Sectionals, the Lady Eagles are looking at a possible Section Finals trip if all lands in place. They start the season off 1-1 after crushing Ticonderoga 50-26, but falling to Moriah.

***“After a year of being the Lady Griffins, the Girls' Varsity team has come back to Westport”***



# Financial Aid Demystified

By: Victoria Cole

Bad news- college is expensive. Good news- help is available and it's called Financial Aid! I had no idea what financial aid was until I attended the Financial Aid 101 meeting at Westport Central School with a guest speaker, Ms. Kerry Lubold, from SUNY Plattsburgh. At this meeting, and with a little online research, I learned that financial aid is money, either gifted or loaned, that you receive to help pay for college expenses and that there are four main types of financial aid:

## 1. Grants

- Gift aid that can be need based or merit based and does not need to be repaid.
- Sources include: federal government, state governments, the college you are attending, and private organizations.
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required to determine eligibility. Go to [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) to start your application today.
- Pell Grants are one of the most popular government grants.
- NYS Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is available to NYS residents. To apply for New York State TAP grant, go to [www.tapweb.org](http://www.tapweb.org)

## 2. Scholarships

- Gift aid based on many different criteria such as: academic performance, athletic ability, religious affiliation, or course specific majors.
- Sources include: the college you attend, private organizations, professional and social organizations.
- May be highly competitive to receive.
- May require an essay or interviews.
- NYS now offers the Excelsior Scholarship to NYS residents, go to [www.hesc.ny.gov](http://www.hesc.ny.gov) to learn more.

## 3. Loans

- Money borrowed that must be repaid, with interest, over a period of time.
- Sources include: federal government, banks, and other lending institutes.
- Generally repayment will not start until you finish college.
- Does not reduce overall costs of college.

## 4. Work Study

- Work program through which you earn money in a job, usually on campus.
- Sources include the federal government.

Your college preparation includes more than just picking your major and the college you will attend. It should also include talking with your parents about the cost of college and not just assuming that your family will have enough money to pay for college. Don't wait, go online and start your research today!

**Plattsburgh**  
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

