

BEHIND THE WALL



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Special points of interest:

- Westport Students attend Youth Climate Summit and look to greener future
- WCS announces the beginning of a Pre- Kindergarten program
- Everything you need to know about being a student in today's day and age
- The Senior Class performs a memorable rendition of "Almost, Maine"
- WPTSO Fun Run winners
- Field Trips — are they worth it?



WCS STUDENTS LOOK TO A GREENER FUTURE

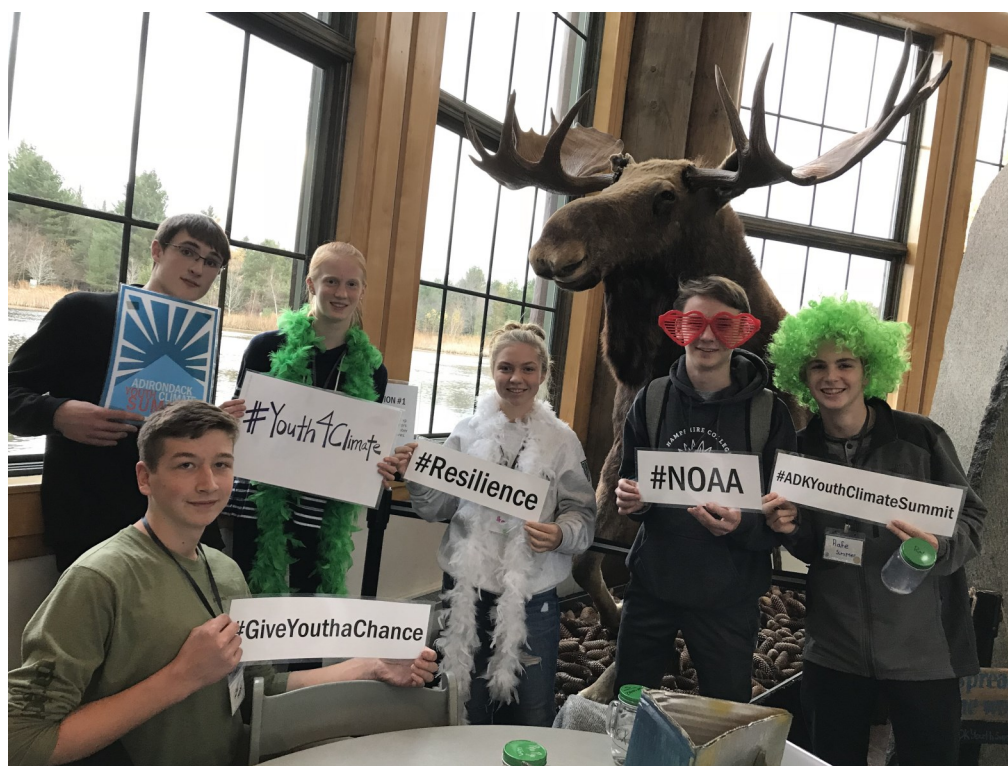
BY: ANNETTE STEPHENS

At the beginning of November, the 10th annual Adirondack Youth Climate Summit ensued, linking hundreds of students and several inspiring climate activists for two days of "saving the world," as my basketball coach put it. As you may have guessed, this article is about climate change, and while many articles entailing climate change, including articles I have written in the past, start with a proclamation about how climate change is closing in around us, or how we need to take action; I reject the common utilization of such

phrases. This is my logic, and I think if you zoomed in on it, you would see that it can be applied to the global issue in a metaphoric way; the people whom you need to tell these things to are not the people you should be focusing on. The people that already know, and act upon the necessary changes, are the ones that are entitled to your attention; the people that need telling will not be the "world savers" of tomorrow. The Climate Summit offers an intense two days of education and adult discussion where these phrases are not thrown

around because they don't have to be.

This was Westport's third year attending the climate summit, my second, and first year for Rachel Storey, Rafe Simmer, Solomon Fair, Walter Moore, and Odin Kohler. At the Climate Summit 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 about it, and learn about it. At the end



WCS'S GREENER FUTURE

(CONTINUED)

BY: ANNETTE STEPHENS

"Our 2018-19 plan focuses on a wide range of small actions such as removing the straws from the cafeteria, encouraging teachers to incorporate climate change lessons or projects into their curriculum, and shutting off lights, or shutting down computers.."

"Personally, I am a huge advocate and participant in Meatless Mondays."

of the second day we designed a climate action plan for our school. Our 2018-19 plan focuses on a wide range of small actions such as removing the straws from the cafeteria, encouraging teachers to incorporate climate change lessons or projects into their curriculum, and shutting off lights, or shutting down computers. These ideas are small, but they are realistic and doable, and added together they can make a bigger difference than you might think.

And so I return to my metaphor, climate change is nearly irreversible, and I believe that this is the result of too few people focusing on too big of a problem. Just as when approaching conversations, or doing some environmental communication, you need to assess your current abilities, and what you can make of this moment now. There are some people that will not change their ways for climate change and some that will not even acknowledge its existence. These are not the people who deserve our attention; likewise there are problems that we need not focus on, or at least the readers of this article should not. They are simply too big for us to take on; it is a more proactive route for us to take working with those who want to be worked with, or working on problems that want to be solved by us. For example, at the Climate Summit, we could have developed a 10 year plan to convert WCS to clean energy; however, with our unique school situation right now, this does not seem practical for a group of students to do in an hour with just our brains as resources; instead we developed a series of small actions that we can

theoretically put into practice in a matter of days, and see the changes that we create. To further support the validity of my metaphor, I would like to introduce you to the Meatless Monday campaign.

Personally, I am a huge advocate and participant in Meatless Mondays. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that the meat industry generates nearly one-fifth of the man-made greenhouse gas emissions; on top of that, meat producers require an ungodly amount of water. A look at the statistics of eating meat just 6 days a week instead of 7 over the course of a year was enough for me.

If you:

Ate one less burger a week, it would be the equivalent of taking your car off the road for 320 miles;

Skip meat and cheese one day a week with your family, it would be the equivalent of taking your car off the road for five weeks – or reducing everyone's daily showers by 3 minutes;

Skip steak once a week with your family, it would be the equivalent of taking your car off the road for nearly three months;

And if the entire U.S. did not eat meat or cheese for just one day a week, it would be the equivalent of

not driving 91 billion miles – or taking 7.6 million cars off the road.

This campaign demonstrates beautifully how small acts can make a huge difference. Why should 20 people be trying to move mountains to save the world when the 7 billion people who are all responsible for this mess could move a pebble and find an even greater outcome? I challenge you to apply this article to your life and change at least one thing in your daily, weekly or monthly life that is accomplishable and will make a difference. As Westport Central works on forming a Green Team and making our community more eco friendly, we encourage, and would gladly accept, any ideas and/or donations from fellow Westportians to allow our Green Team to succeed.



WESTPORT TO OPEN PRE-K PROGRAM

BY: MAGGIE PLOUFE

For the first time in Westport Central School history, a fully functional Pre-K program is in the works. Being the only district in the Essex and Clinton County areas without this program, the need for this educational service proved to be very prevalent.

To make this program a reality for our school, our very own Mr. Meyer wrote a grant to acquire complete funding for the program, which will cover the teacher and teacher's aide salaries, classroom furniture, and supplies such as paper, pencils, craft materials, etc. The program's antici-

pated start date will be January 7, 2019. Educational services will be provided to all families with children three and four years old, Monday through Friday from eight-thirty AM to two o'clock PM, free of charge. Although the classroom space for this program has yet to be determined, the Home Economics room seems to be the most fitting place for the youngsters based on classroom requirements of having a bathroom on-hand.

In an interview, Mr. Meyer suggested that in order to get the maximum efficiency of

this grant, and of this program in general, we need to advertise this new addition to as many community members as possible. The grant stands for three years, and the amount of money that WCS receives will be dependent on the enrollment of the class. "We really need to populate the class," said Meyer, "and twelve to eighteen students would be ideal." Another big part of hosting this program in our community and education system at WCS is the flexibility aspect as well. Mr. Meyer would like families to know that if there are any reservations or complications that would prevent a child from attending Pre-K classes at WCS, there is room to make adjustments to better suit the families' situations and he will try at best to meet every family's needs. "If you know anyone whose child may be eligible to attend Pre-K at WCS," (in a few months) "please invite them!"



"Educational services will be provided to all families with children three and four years old, Monday through Friday from eight-thirty AM to two o'clock PM, free of charge."

BEING A STUDENT IN 2018

BY: EDWARD NESBITT

Let me just tell you that being a student in today's society is not always easy. Adults often tell us that we don't know what stress is and to just wait until we grow up. But, we as teenage students, have our own levels of stress. For instance, all school activities require us to uphold our grade point average to high standards, along with the expectations that we dedicate any extra time to studying day and night. Then, getting our homework turned in on time seems simple, but we still hope to have a life outside of school as well. Many students

in their high school years start their first job, so now we have school in the mornings, followed by the responsibilities to be taken care of at home, and then we are off to work. By the time we are done, we are too exhausted to finish our school work, but we stay up late trying to return to school feeling half conscious the next day.

Each of us has a choice in how we accept these challenges in life, and for that, I choose my faith. My point is, it is a whole lot more stressful to be a student in high school than adults believe. Though it

shouldn't be this way, it only gets worse as years pass by. We are constantly being judged, especially for what we believe in. So our stress may not involve paying bills, buying groceries, or taking care of a family, but I'm sure if the adults in our lives could go back to school today, they would be surprised at how much it has changed. I don't want you to think for a minute that there aren't good moments and memories made while we are students. We find our friends, our mentors and, if we are lucky, we find ourselves.

"Each of us has a choice in how we accept these challenges."

CLASS OF 2019 PERFORMS ALMOST, MAINE

BY: LAWRENCE LOBDELL

"The senior class was able to pull off something very special this year and as a junior, I can say my class has some massive shoes to fill for next year's senior production."

On November 9th I, and the community of Westport, once again gathered in the Bulles Auditorium to witness another senior class production. As I took my seat I was prepared for another "run of the mill" senior show that Westport has become accustomed to—a show that's funny with a few standout performances, but is pretty clear that most of the kids in the show have never been on stage before. The seniors had some big shoes to fill following the Class of 2018's "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," but from the moment the opening square dance scene began, I knew this wasn't going to be your standard senior show.

The Class of 2019 gave us a production that'll go down in the books with "Almost

Maine". It was funny, thought-provoking, and unlike any production I've seen at Westport Central. The show's main message, at least my interpretation of it, was love and every form that it takes. From two strangers finding love at first sight, to a long time married couple not being able to find that love anymore, the show's narrative weaves through these different stories coupled with musical breaks performed by Owen Pierce, Kaeli Brack, Peter Vaiciulis, Hudson Stephens, and Kaitlynn Haynes.

I find it hard to list stand out performances because everyone in this production was so good. For a cast with only two people with past experience in a production at WCS (William Napper and Hudson

Stephens) the rest of the gang really held their own. The show was also able to pull off an atmosphere that was very special. With the great set, the aforementioned musical breaks, the costuming, the props, everything just transported you to this world of "Almost Maine".

The senior class was able to pull off something very special this year and as a junior, I can say my class has some massive shoes to fill for next year's senior production. I made a deal with the seniors in my physics class that if they pulled off a good show on Friday, I would attend Saturday. I did go on Saturday, and I would have gone to others if they had more shows. Good work seniors. You really did it.



RAFE SIMMER FINISHES ATOP STUDENT RUNNERS AT WPTSO FUN RUN

BY: HUDSON STEPHENS



On a drizzly Saturday Afternoon in early November, the 7th annual WPTSO Fun Run commenced. The rain couldn't keep the dedicated PTSO supporters away, as attendance both met and exceeded expectations. Spectators stood in the grey mist and

watched as each runner sprinted through the finish line, a colorful balloon arch which stood out on this particularly dreary morning. Jared Whalen finished atop all runners with a time of 19:36. Rafe Simmer, WCS freshman, finished third overall and 1st in his division, defeating all other student athletes with a time of 20:23. His brother Cole finished only 46 seconds behind him, at 21:09. Beloved science teacher Jay Fiegl defeated Varsity Boys soccer coach Evan George by 49 seconds in the 40-49 age division with a final time of 21:16. Freshman Thea Shaw finished 1 second ahead of classmate Jameson Fiegl with a time of 23:26 and won the female 15-18 division. Other Westport student-runners included Rachel Storey and Sydney Bisselle, winners of the female 11-14 division,

Olivia Hathaway and Miranda Kimball, winners of the female 7-10 division, and in order of race completion, Walter Moore, Otis Wekin, Henry Gibson, Kaeli Brack, Abigail Schwoebel, Ezra Wekin, Holden Costin, Alexander Gough, Claire Reynolds, Leo Hatch, Mason Sherman, Aubrey Sherman, Olivia Montville, Emmalee Johnson, Luna Van Deusen, Sofie Fiegl, Victoria Daniels, and Madison Miller.

The WPTSO would like to thank everyone who came out, and remind our readers that it's never too late to become a member. Stay tuned for more fundraisers and donation opportunities which contribute to the betterment of student's educational experience at WCS.

"The rain couldn't keep the dedicated PTSO supporters away, as attendance both met and exceeded expectations."



Westport CSD

BEHIND THE WALL
25 SISCO STREET
WESTPORT NY
12993

Email:
brankmanc@westportcs.org
stephens.hudson@student.westportcs.org
stephens.annette@student.westportcs.org



"What makes the difference for most students is their level of interest, and if will they be missing key work, like an important math class."

FIELD TRIPS OR NO FIELD TRIPS?

BY: JEREMY ROSSSI

To the Field? Or not to the field? Some of school's best moments happen on field trips. They can be exciting, new, hands-on, a step outside the classroom, but are they worth it? With new curriculum coming from the state, some teachers find field trips take away key learning time from classes.

One subject that often dominates the field trip department is science. Science is all around us, and sometimes the best place to observe it is outside the class in the real world! Mrs. Loher says, "Sometimes the best way to teach science is out in the field!" As a student, I tend to agree, hands-on learning can be the best way to absorb certain information. Mr. Fiegl's Adirondack Science class often spends their classes out in the field, because what better place to study the Adirondacks, than the Adirondacks!

The subject that tends to suffer the most from field trips is math. We all are familiar with the crunch time that is necessary in math class; Mr. Marcotte and Mr. Fairchild have certain curriculum they must

teach by test time, but field trips can make it tough. Unlike some other classes that have less pressure from the state, the daily math class is often planned weeks at a time by teachers. Multiple field trips can really put a wrench in the kogs of a demanding class schedule. If the whole class is gone, you lose a teaching day; if half the class is gone, you lose a teaching day. Also not many field trips involve a lot of math, which results in a math-less day.

Students have displayed mixed messages about field trips in Westport. Students find they can be extremely fun and productive or useless and time wasting. What makes the difference for most students is their level of interest, and if will they be missing key work, like an important math class. Especially when it comes to crunch time in the 4th quarter, field trips can be inconvenient.

With the pros and cons of field trips, we end at a sort of stalemate; there needs to be some sacrifice to make them happen, but how much is too much sacrifice? How do we

make sure we have interested students on these trips? How can we get the most out of a field trip? Mrs. Loher thinks that the best way to bring about the best of both worlds is more planning. Lists of trips before they happen will create more flexibility for those students who are interested in participating, (if the trip applies to them), and a master schedule of the trips will allow teachers to plan ahead. Student Maggie Ploufe also believes that a little more planning would give her more flexibility in choosing the trips she's interested in.

As a student, I think field trips are great, but I've also experienced some not so great. I think planning is definitely the key to satisfying all parties. I would love to have a chance to see what field trips are lined up for the year and choose those that I am interested in. Even though there's important curriculum in other classes, field trips are important to the school learning experience. What do you think?

December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Christmas in Westport
2	3 Boys M/V @ Chazy	4 Merger Referendum Noon-8PM Middle/High School Winter Concert 6PM, Bulles Auditorium	5 Girls M/V vs. Chazy	6 B M/J/V vs. Willsboro G M/V @ Willsboro Elementary Winter Concert 6PM Bulles Auditorium	7 Girls JV vs. Peru Quizbowl 1PM Essex HS, VT	8
9	10 B/G JV @ Ti Start of WCS FBFA Food Drive	11 Boys JV vs. Etown Boys M/V vs. Keene Early Dismissal 12PM	12 Girls M/V vs. Keene	13 B M/J/V vs. Crown Point BOE Meeting 6PM Conference Room	14 GM/V @ Crown Point B V vs. Johnsbury End of 15 Week Marking Period Valentine's Day	15
16	17 Girls V vs. Bolton	18 Boys M/V @ Seton Boys JV vs. Lake Placid	19 Girls M/V vs. Seton	20 Girls JV vs. Schroon Lake B M/J/V @ Etown	21	22
23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 WCS CLOSED	27 WCS CLOSED	28 WCS CLOSED	29
30	31 New Year's Eve					

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