

# *the western* PENNSYLVANIAN



NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

VOLUME 130 #3 SPRING 2017



Read Across America  
PG 5



“No Mercy” Lives  
Up to Its Name  
at BotsIQ  
Competition

PG 6  
▼



▲  
PG 11

A Little Bit of  
Punxsutawney in  
Pittsburgh



# the western PENNSYLVANIAN

## Board of Trustees

### Officers

**Melissa Scheffler**  
President

**Grace Shirk-Emmons**  
Vice President

**Angelo Martini, Sr.**  
Secretary

**Dean Kartsonas**  
Treasurer

Barbara Ann Boylan  
Denise E. Brown  
Wes Dickson\*  
Laurel Echavarría  
Andrew Fisher  
Fred Griffin  
Tim Harris  
Dr. Barry E. Hirsch  
Chris McCrady  
Leo A. McGowan  
Dr. Harold Mowl, Jr.\*  
Fatima Muhammad\*  
Donald E. Rhoten  
John Tommasini

### Emeritus Trustees

Rodney Danco, Jr.\*  
Ross Farber  
Dr. Mark Friedman  
Jeffrey Hutchins  
Laura Kesel  
Dr. Harry Lang\*  
Dr. David Martin  
J. Sherman McLaughlin  
Elizabeth Pollard\*

\*Graduate of WPSD

## Supervisions

4 Letter From CEO

## What's Happening?

5 Read Across America

5 Read Quest

6 "No Mercy" Lives Up to Its Name at the BotsIQ Competition

7 Academic Team Makes Good Showing at Competition

7 Family Literacy Workshop

8 Family Learning Weekend

8 Littlest Learners Get Hands-On with Science at the Children's Museum

9 Language Lab: Looking for Learning Near and Far

9 Race for Renewable Energy

10 WPSD Chess Team Battles on the Boards

10 Setting Them Up and Knocking Them Down at Special Olympics Bowling Tournament

11 A Little Bit of Punxsutawney in Pittsburgh

11 Pi Day: Desserts and Decimals

12 Hearts A-Flutter on Valentine's Day

13 Toddlers Explore the Colors of the Rainbow

14 Luck of the Irish is with Us at WPSD

## Exploring Pathways to the Future

15 Tour Day at Forbes Road Career and Technology Center

15 National Technical Honor Society Installation Service

16 Juniors Attend National College Fair

16 OVR Helps Prepare Students for Life After WPSD

17 Career Day Helps Students Discover Future Workforce Opportunities

17 Pre-K Class Hits the Small Screen

## In The Community

18 Creek Connections: Exploring Water Quality

18 Urban Ecostewards Explore the Connection Between Nature and Humanity

19 A Friendly Visit with Our Neighbors

19 Signing and Singing in Harmony

20 WPSD Hosts Communication in the Community Speaker Series

21 An Evening of Fun, Friends and Community

21 WPSD Celebrates Deaf History Month

## Athletics

22 ESDAA Tournament at ASD: On the Court and Leading the Cheer

23 WPSD Hosts Thrilling Middle School Basketball Tournament

## Support Our School!

24 Monthly Giving

24 Auction Save the Date



## Bear Tracks (Opposite Side)

- 2 Dr. Seuss' Birthday
- 3 PSO Update
- 3 100th Day of School
- 4 After School Activities
- 5 Celebrating Our Kids:  
An Evening at The Scranton School
- 6 PBIS "Blow Outs!" Update
- 7 Home Away From Home

## Outreach

- 8 Hershey Preschool
- 8 Story Time in Camp Hill
- 8 Family Literacy Workshop and Family Learning Day



## WPSD Dates to Remember

### JUNE

- 8 Graduation
- 9 End of 4th Quarter  
Last Day of Classes - 12:00 Dismissal
- 26-30 WPSD Camp Discovery

### JULY

- 4 Independence Day
- 5-7 Summer Preschool
- 6-27 Tuesdays and Thursdays -  
Discovery Days Toddler Group
- 10-14 ESY & Summer Preschool
- 17-21 ESY & Summer Preschool
- 24-28 ESY & Summer Preschool

### AUGUST

- 20 PSO Picnic  
Residential Students Return
- 21 First Day of Classes
- 21-25 First Week of Soccer and Volleyball  
Practice

### SEPTEMBER

- Deaf Awareness Month
- 4 Labor Day  
Residential Students Return
- 5 Classes Return
- 16 WPSD Block Party

### OCTOBER

- 6 2017 WPSD Auction & Gala
- 6 & 7 Spike Out Volleyball Tournament  
WPSD at Maryland School for  
the Deaf
- 20 & 21 ESDAA Soccer Tournament  
at Marie Philip School
- 28 & 29 ESDAA Volleyball Tournament  
at American School for the Deaf



*Editor: Dr. Steve Farmer  
Managing Editor: Sarah Bartlebaugh  
Managing Editor: Jessica Marks*

The Western Pennsylvanian is a publication of the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. It is one source of communication with parents, alumni, teachers, friends of WPSD, and other schools for the Deaf.

# Supervisions

A note from CEO, Dr. Farmer

Friends,

As I write this, flowers and trees are blooming, the grass in our yards is becoming greener, and people are working and playing outside more. Spring is upon us. It's a special time of the year as we become revitalized.

As I close in on my first year at WPSD, I have come to love the Programs of WPSD. As I travel to Camp Hill and Scranton and work in Pittsburgh, I have come to realize how truly special the organization is.

We have a special team of Trustees on our board who truly care about the success of the organization.

We have a very special group of teachers throughout the entire organization providing quality education.

We have a special team of administrators in Pittsburgh, Scranton and Camp Hill who work tirelessly day in and day out to ensure that each child receives nothing but quality programming.

We have a special crew of residential staff in Pittsburgh and Scranton who work hard providing quality after-school programming and keeping nice and comfortable places for our children to stay during the week. All of them care about what we offer to our children.

We have a special squad of people in Pittsburgh and Scranton who (1) work inside all our buildings at all hours of the day and night to keep our facilities clean and safe, and (2) outside to keep the campus safe and beautiful and our equipment operating properly.

Our security and medical professionals at WPSD and SSDHHC are special because they work hard to ensure everybody is safe and healthy.

Our support services personnel (including school counselors, assistants, office personnel, audiologists, speech therapists, librarians, coaches, information technology members, interpreters, and so forth) are all special because they work hard to know our students AND families well, and ensure everything runs as smoothly as possible.

We have special food service teams at WPSD and SSDHHC who work hard to ensure our children are never hungry.

We are very thankful to have special groups of people who support us on a daily basis: our legislators and donors. The Programs of WPSD would not be able to exist without their moral and financial support!

We do all this because we all believe that our children are truly special and deserve nothing but the best. Throughout this issue of the Western Pennsylvanian, you will see all the special things our students get to experience throughout the organization.

At WPSD, SSDHHC, and Hershey, our children come first and it shows because of all our special people and the special things they do for our special children.

Our organization is special because we believe that quality education is not an option – it is a must!

Enjoy this issue of the WPAN and remember you are special!



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Farmer". The signature is fluid and cursive.

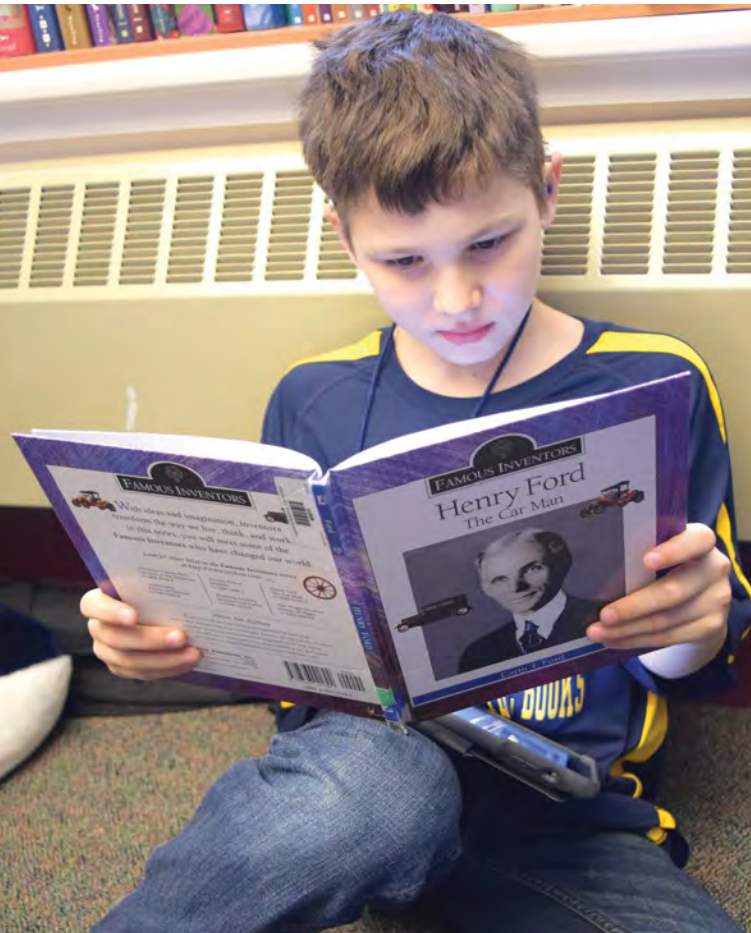
Steve Farmer, Ed.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

# What's Happening?

Latest News Around the WPSD Campus

## Read Across America

The Children's Center took part in fun activities related to Read Across America. The students worked on crafts - forming the face of the Big Bad Wolf from the story, *The Three Little Pigs*. Others acted out the story through creative play. The students created snacks that resembled Dr. Seuss' legendary red and white hat using strawberries, bananas and Oreos. The festivities were topped off with Dr. Steve Farmer and Mrs. Carrie Rain building a cake that resembled Dr. Seuss' famous hat. Each child received a book as a special gift to take home and share with their families. ■



## ReadQuest

The Elementary, Middle and High School students embraced the ReadQuest movement celebrated across the nation. It is a one-day event that brings students from all over the country together to celebrate the power of reading. The Accelerated Reader program at WPSD participates in ReadQuest every year. Students filled out postcards finishing the sentence "Reading is a quest for..." Many students curled up with their favorite books, relaxing on bean bag chairs and blankets. Many wore comfortable clothes in an effort to help them relax and fully concentrate on the content of the books. Some students set goals for themselves and received rewards for meeting these initiatives. ■



## “No Mercy” Lives Up to Its Name at the BotsIQ Competition

The WPSD BotsIQ team and their robot “No Mercy” battled hard in the Southwestern PA BotsIQ preliminary competition on St. Patrick’s Day at the Westmoreland County Community College. Much more than luck led this team to an impressive run against their competition. After months of hard work and effort, the team won five matches and lost two. Our Lions demonstrated concentration and a willingness to win! As one judge put it, “WPSD never gives up!” Our sentiments exactly. The BotsIQ team made a good showing at the finals competition at the end of April. Overall, WPSD secured 16th place out of 79 teams! “No Mercy” and our WPSD Lions went out with style, dignity and grit. ■



# Academic Team Makes Good Showing at the Competition

By Julie Ann Mountain

The Academic Bowl competition took place at the end of February, hosted by the Indiana School for the Deaf. The team won three of the five games we played our first day. On the second day WPSD was unable to clinch a victory but the students played their best against some rather challenging teams. Team WPSD kept positive attitudes and demonstrated good sportsmanship throughout the entire competition.

The girls encouraged one another and the older, experienced students shared helpful advice with our first year players Colleen M. (sophomore) and Emily O. (freshman). They all took pride in correctly and quickly answering questions and competed with each other to see who would earn the most individual points. Rain, a second year member, earned that honor this year. The team will bid her and Ruth adieu, sending best wishes to both of them as they graduate this spring. Even though two members of our team will not return next year, we still have a lot of highly qualified and motivated participants in our practice team. Lots of students are vying for the four coveted competition chairs for next year. We continue to practice weekly and look ahead to more scrimmages and exciting, challenging competitions. ■



## Family Literacy Workshop

This past February, fifteen families attended the 'Hooked on Books About Winter!' Family Literacy and American Sign Language workshop hosted by the Children's Center at WPSD. Children, parents and family members enjoyed a day of storytelling, sign language practice, hands-on activities, and tips that are sure to empower parents who serve as their child's most important teachers. Parents learned ways to encourage and promote reading and communication. The workshop proved to be an informative and helpful experience for parents and children alike. ■



# Family Learning Weekend

WPSD hosted Family Learning Weekend at the end of March. The theme for this workshop was "Pathways to Literacy." Several of our families enjoyed dinner Friday evening followed by a panel discussion with WPSD Language Arts staff, a roundtable discussion with WPSD staff, and the event's keynote speaker Bobbie Jo Kite. On Saturday, parents participated in a family reading and sign language workshop. WPSD teachers Sheri Morgan and Christie Homell discussed strategies for fostering early literacy learning and American Sign Language skills using children's literature, which can help a child recognize the sequence of events within a story. Saturday afternoon, Bobbie Jo Kite, who works in the Department of Education at Gallaudet University and is a WPSD graduate, presented to parents about family language planning. This presentation introduced concepts of family language to examine families' language practices, language beliefs and attitudes, and language management with their young children. It was an informative and fun weekend for all involved! ■



## Littlest Learners Get Hands on with Science at The Children's Museum

*By Carrie Rain*

In February, the Children's Center and Children's House students and staff traveled to the Children's Museum in Pittsburgh. They had lots of fun, enjoyed hands-on activities and explored different concepts, including colors, simple machines, cause and effect, light, velocity, gravity, engineering and more! What an awesome day of learning and fun! ■

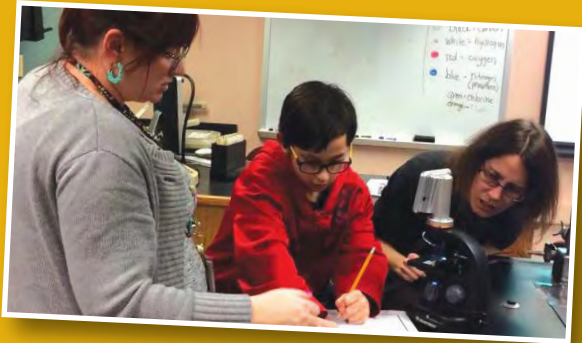




# Language Lab: Looking for Learning Near and Far

By Michelle Zelei

Language Lab students enjoyed a hands-on interactive lesson on microscopes and telescopes taught by WPSD's science teacher Julie Ann Mountain! The kids were very curious and excited to examine the various specimens, up close and personal, including a bee's wing, the antenna of a butterfly, and bacteria. ■



# Race for Renewable Energy

By Erin McNeil-Mascaro

The WPSD 9th grade Environmental Science classes came together for a culminating activity in their Energy Unit in March. STEM was the focus as students were given limited materials and time to design and test different blades for a wind turbine. They could manipulate several variables such as size, shape, and length. They could also control the number and angle of blades they used. It was a hot competition as three teams tried to see which one could convert mechanical energy into the highest amount of electrical energy. Each team did very well and they were able to improve their design after testing. We love STEM here at WPSD! ■



# WPSD Chess Team Battles on the Boards

By Donald Mazreku

**2017 WPSD Chess Team Final Record: 2 wins, 6 losses**

The students persevered despite some tough matches. They were eager to compete and attended chess practice regularly to improve their skills. Many of the students made significant improvements over the course of the season. There was an even number of girls and boys competing. Looking forward, our team will continue to practice and pursue formal lessons through the year. WPSD is very proud of its young team and their accomplishments and progress throughout the season. ■



## Setting Them Up and Knocking Them Down at Special Olympics Bowling Tournament

By Alisa Whysong

On January 25, the Applied Studies Program participated in the annual Special Olympics Bowling Tournament. The students were all champions and did their best. As the Special Olympics motto goes-



“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.”

# A Little Bit of Punxsutawney in Pittsburgh

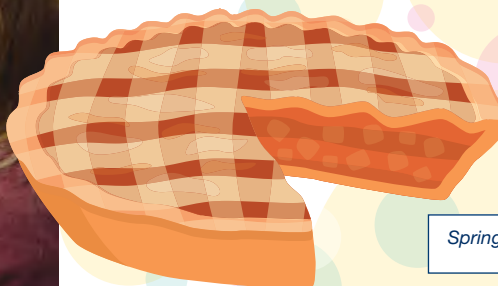
The Children's Center students celebrated Groundhog Day by constructing fun artwork and decorating their snacks to resemble the face of good old Punxsutawney Phil. Six more weeks of winter was predicted but no amount of cold weather could bring these smiling faces down! ■



## Pi Day Desserts and Decimals



Mathematicians around the world celebrated March 14. This special day is known as Pi Day, an annual recognition and observance of the mathematical constant Pi, which is approximately 3.14159. Students celebrated the special day in many creative ways. Storytelling exercises helped elementary students grasp the concept of Pi in a fun, novel and entertaining way. Some classes measured the circumference and diameter of circles and various items shaped like circles, even bicycle tires, and then divided those numbers to see if the answer would equal Pi. The students then celebrated their findings by having a slice of – you guessed it – pie – the kind you can eat! What a fun-filled learning experience for all! ■



# Hearts A-Flutter on Valentine's Day

Love was in the air at WPSD on Valentine's Day! Some of the Elementary students exchanged cards and smiles while others took part in festive, collaborative holiday activities. The students had a fun - and challenging - time trying to pin the heart on Cupid. Some students colored and decorated holiday themed designs while others played Valentine's Day bingo.

Elsewhere, Middle School students earned their fourth merit party of the year just in time for Valentine's Day. Mrs. Gerlach, Ms. Borelle, and some dedicated students helped decorate the Lion's Den in red and pink! Students had the opportunity to play games with friends, get a "love" tattoo, and make their own Valentines. There were some pretty happy winners for the "Guess How Many" candy challenges! The photo booth was very creative. It is always enjoyable to watch our kids be silly while taking pictures with props. Students and staff enjoyed the group dancing videos on the dance floor, as well. Even Dr. Farmer joined in on the fun!

The WPSD Class of 2019 celebrated Valentine's Day with a party in the Lion's Den. The high school students enjoyed good food, games, dancing and each other's company. It was a wonderful afternoon of fun and friendship. ■





# Toddlers Explore The Colors of the Rainbow

The colors of the rainbow were the focus of Discovery Days gatherings during the month of March. Each day the toddlers were asked to wear a designated color. The individual photos seen here will be used to make a class rainbow! It was a fun and expressive way to learn about colors!

In keeping with the rainbow theme, the toddlers and their parents took part in color-centered activities including painting, playing with color-dyed Play Doh, searching for yellow rubber duckies, enjoying green smoothies and a variety of delicious snacks!

The toddlers also made rainbow rice. Each child shook a mason jar filled with food coloring and rubbing alcohol to change the white rice into colored rice. The students dyed seven jars of rice to make the colors in the rainbow. The toddlers ended the Rainbow Unit by playing with the dried rice. They mixed the rainbow rice with plastic eggs. They scooped and poured rice to create a colorful mixture. As a tasty end to the rainbow activities, the students ate rainbow sprinkles on their donuts at snack time! ■





# Luck of The Irish is with Us at WPSD

The Children's Center jumped wholeheartedly into the spirit of St. Patrick's Day. The morning began with Ms. Christie Homell reading a story to the group through American Sign Language called *The Littlest Leprechaun*. A leprechaun left the kids a hat in the trap they had set for him. Following this discovery, the students, who were decked out in their best green gear, gathered together for snack time. Fittingly, the children enjoyed a special bowl of treats with rainbows left by the leprechauns. Unfortunately, the leprechauns also left a mess for the students in each class they visited. What a fun way to celebrate this holiday!

Meanwhile, the Peer Mentors hosted their annual St. Patrick's Day party at the Lion's Den on campus. Residential students had a blast taking part in several holiday-related games including Hot Clover, Green Tall Tower, Pot of Gold, Green Targets, Hit the Leprechauns, and Green Bull's Eye. Green drinks and cookies were served to all of the guests and the Lion's Den was open for business! A great night of fun, celebration and camaraderie! ■



# Exploring Pathways to The Future

## Tour Day at Forbes Road Career and Technology Center

On February 10, a group of WPSD students attended the "Hands on Tour" Day at Forbes Road Career and Technology Center. They had a great morning visiting classrooms and participating in activities. This was an important and valuable learning opportunity as students explore possibilities for future careers! ■



## National Technical Honor Society Installation Service

On March 7, Forbes Road Career and Technology Center held their National Technical Honor Society Installation Service. Two WPSD students, Rain K. and Nick M., satisfied the NTHS criteria for grades and attendance, receiving awards in the service. This is Rain's second year being honored. It was a beautiful ceremony, and an honor for our students. Congratulations to Rain and Nick for their hard work and dedication to reach this memorable accomplishment. ■



## Juniors Attend National College Fair

On February 9, a group of WPSD juniors attended the National College Fair at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. They stopped at the Rochester Institute of Technology booth to talk to the representative about NTID. This was an informative and noteworthy event that helps students prepare for their futures after graduation. ■



## OVR Helps Prepare Students for Life After WPSD

The school welcomed Brett Glavey from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to campus on January 26. His presentation, O.V.R. 101, included information on how to apply for services with the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, eligibility for services, and resources offered through the P.E.T.S. or Pre-Employment Transition Services and W.I.O.A. (Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act). Students in 8th grade through the 13th year program attended. It was a very informative and helpful event as these young people prepare for life after WPSD. ■





## Career Day Helps Students Discover Future Workforce Opportunities

On January 25, the Transition Team at WPSD hosted Career Day on campus for our High School students. Several presenters shared their professional insight and experiences, introducing students to a variety of career fields. These presenters included Val Morschl - Art Therapy (Milestone); Sean Parsons - Pharmacy Tech and other programs at Bidwell Training Center; Kim Hawkins - Photography; Justin Harvilla - Member Ambassador and Artist (Tech Shop); Dan Catalano - Civil Engineering (NASA). Mr. Catalano is the father of WPSD math teacher, Nicholas Catalano. Students enjoyed a great afternoon of discovery and interest regarding future career possibilities. ■



## Pre-K Class Hits The Small Screen

On March 13, Ms. Katherine Kolosky's Pre-K class visited the WPSD News Room! They had been learning about weather and practiced being the weather reporters during the School's news program. They stood in front of the green screen and did a great job explaining the forecast and sharing information about the snowy weather that was expected. Mr. Brian Slavinsky also gave a tour of the area where the high school students observe the wind speed and temperature to help with their reporting. It was a great educational opportunity, applying what they have been learning in the classroom and then experiencing what it would be like to be a professional TV meteorologist. ■



# In The Community

## Creek Connections: Exploring Water Quality

By Erin McNeil-Mascaro

Throughout the winter and in the early part of spring, students in the Consumer Science class continued their monthly visits to the creek in Fern Hollow at Frick Park. Because it was unseasonably warm, the creek had not frozen and the students were able to get water samples to test its quality. They were able to generate results related to the dissolved oxygen, turbidity, nitrates and phosphates. They did an outstanding job. We discussed how it is important for the water quality to be good in order for living things in the water (macroinvertebrates) to survive. The students also filmed the area and their testing process in preparation for a STEM video they are creating for the Carnegie Science Center competition! ■



## Urban Ecostewards Explore the Connection Between Nature and Humanity

By Erin McNeil-Mascaro

The 9th and 10th grade high school urban ecostewards class completed their 3rd field trip of the school year. The focus of this February trip was an "urban hike." The students met at Schenley Plaza in Oakland at the University of Pittsburgh and hiked all around Oakland, ending at Schenley Park's visitor center. The goal of the hike was to observe how living organisms in the area have adapted and thrived in an urban ecosystem. For example, the peregrine falcons live at the top of the Cathedral of Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. These birds of prey usually live on cliffs, which makes the Cathedral a perfect place for them to nest and hunt their prey. The class also discussed Pittsburgh's history with the steel industry and how some buildings still show how the air pollution from those factories affected both living and nonliving things in the region. ■



## A Friendly Visit with Our Neighbors

In March, students in the Children's Center welcomed their friends from Edgewood Day Care! All of the students took part in St. Patrick's Day related festivities including creating their own pot o' gold hats out of construction paper and glitter. Other fun activities included an obstacle course and a shamrock scavenger hunt that centered on matching numbers with their corresponding signs. Green beads were bestowed upon each student who successfully completed the course and the hunt. It was a great morning of learning spent with our partners and friends! ■



## Signing and Singing in Harmony

By Deborah Remis

WPSD's very own Mini SignShine was the featured guest at the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) Region 1 Singfest. The event was hosted by the Pittsburgh Public Schools at the Carnegie Music Hall in Oakland.

A select group of students from throughout Western Pennsylvania, who made the competitive audition for the honors chorus, sang a variety of songs for the event. Our students signed during the song "I Am a Small Part of the World" that evening. To the public's surprise midway through the song, all 166 students, while singing the refrain, signed the refrain in unison with our Mini SignShine. The stage was filled with signing, which was an awesome sight!

Our students and the honors chorus practiced for several hours in the afternoon before performing that evening. Mini SignShine also performed several songs in the lobby for those entering the Music Hall prior to the start of "Singfest." Special thanks to Gretchen Eckroat, Pittsburgh Public Schools Music Teacher and special friend of WPSD, for making it all possible. Congratulations to Mini SignShine on a great performance! ■





## WPSD Hosts Communication in The Community Speaker Series

By Lyndsay Marx

The "Communication in the Community" speaker series is monthly event hosted collaboratively by the Speech Language Pathology and Audiology departments at WPSD. This organized series involves inviting Deaf/Hard of Hearing professionals as well as representatives of Deaf/Hard of Hearing support services to come speak to our high school and middle school students about preparing to transition into adulthood and how communication plays a significant role in that process. The speakers at these events share personal stories related to their demographics as well as educational and professional experiences that led them to their current positions. Each presenter concludes with a positive message of worldly wisdom that helped them achieve their dreams.

Since September we've hosted our very own Dr. Steve Farmer (WPSD CEO), Dr. Suzanne Yoder (deaf audiologist at the Hear Well Center in Pittsburgh), Jim Lyle (Vice President of Community Bank in Washington, PA), Chris Haulmark, AKA "The Deaf Wanderer" (world traveler and social media vlogger), Kevin Symons and Marcus Adrian (architects at Mackey Mitchell Architects in St. Louis, MO), Dr. Catherine Palmer (Director of UPMC Audiology), and Children's Hospital Audiologists Dr. Naomi Fireman and Dr. Rena Levy. WPSD is very grateful for the time these individuals dedicated to this series, especially those who traveled across state lines. We look forward to continue building on this program in the years to come. ■



## An Evening of Fun, Friends and Community

We are so incredibly grateful to everyone who supported An Evening in Edgewood on Friday, April 7! This event is an extension of our Commitment to the Community initiative. The goal was to get to know our neighbors from surrounding communities better. The proceeds benefited early education programs through the Children's Center at WPSD, which serves as a significant learning foundation for our youngest students. Attendees at the event enjoyed food stations, a wine tasting, drinks (special thanks to Senator Jay Costa for the beverage donation), great live music by Edgewood-based band Milepost 6, Sally Wiggin as the wonderful emcee, and most importantly, good conversation among neighbors. Thank you to Rep. Paul Costa and Rep. Ed Gainey for joining us that night. We saw familiar faces from around the school and neighborhood and enjoyed meeting some new friends. We were very pleased to share an evening with our staff and neighbors while raising funds for the quality programs and services offered through the Children's Center. What a great night! We look forward to seeing everyone again next year. ■



The first question many people ask is: "Why March 13 through April 15?" The choice of dates encompasses three major events in deaf history:

### Famous Events in Deaf History



## WPSD Celebrates Deaf History Month

March 13 marked the official start of Deaf History Month. Middle and high school students celebrated this special month by participating in a history lesson, which was held in the campus auditorium. ASL teacher John Gibson led the discussion. After important facts about Deaf History and Culture were shared, the students took part in a competition through their iPads and Kahoot, a game-based learning platform. Students went head-to-head against each other, attempting to correctly answer each question asked about Deaf History and Deaf Culture before time ran out. This was an informative and fun experience to kick off this important month! ■



# Athletics

## Sports Overview by Val Wojton

### ESDAA Tournament On The Court and Leading The Cheer

#### Boys' Basketball

On Thursday, February 23, the WPSD boys' basketball team opened this year's ESDAA Tournament against #2 seeded Marie Philip School. It was a tough battle. Our Lions were unable to clinch the victory, landing our team in the loser's bracket. The following day, we were scheduled to play Ohio School for the Deaf (they lost to #3 seeded American School for the Deaf). We lost to Ohio twice this season and we were determined not to let these two losses deter us. We battled all the way to the last second, squeezing out a one-point victory. With that victory, we earned the rights to play in the consolation championship against the New York School for the Deaf-Fanwood on Saturday, February 25. It was an exciting game even though we ended up on the losing side, taking 6th place. Chad D. earned All-Tournament team honors. ■



#### Girls' Basketball

On Thursday, February 23, we opened the 40th Annual ESDAA tournament with a game against the 7th seeded team - Ohio School for the Deaf. We emerged victorious, moving us into the semi-final match against the #3 seeded Marie Philip School. We lost to MPS the following day, 29-26, knocking us into a competition for 3rd place honors against the host team, American School for the Deaf. We solidified the win by a tight score of 20-15. Alyssa H. and Cheyenne S. were named to the All-Tournament team. ■



## Cheerleaders

On the night of Friday, February 24th, the WPSD cheerleading team competed against 5 other schools (American, Lexington, Maryland, Mill Neck Manor, and New York-Fanwood). They nabbed a second place finish behind Lexington. Jessica and Xiaoli C. were named to the All-Tournament team and Jessica was voted the Most Valuable Cheerleader of the tournament. ■

## WPSD Hosts Thrilling Middle School Basketball Tournament

A high-spirited pep rally kicked off the 14th Annual Tri-State Basketball tournament on Wednesday. Mini SignShine opened the celebration at WPSD with a moving ASL rendition of the National Anthem. The Middle School boys and girls teams along with their coaches were recognized. And of course no pep rally is complete without the legendary School chant - "Always Remember, Never Forget, WPSD is #1!" The crowd went wild! This is the first time WPSD has had the privilege of hosting the tournament, which proved to be an exciting two days of basketball.

In the boys' division, MPS took first place honors, WPSD came in second, Kendall secured third place and MSD-CC came in fourth. In the girls' division, Kendall earned first place honors, MPS came in second, WPSD took third place and MSD-CC placed fourth. MSD-CC took home the coveted sportsmanship award in the boys' division and Kendall in the girls' division. Wade D. and Braden E. earned all-tournament honors in the boys' division, while Amy F. secured this same recognition in the



girls' division. Congratulations to all players involved! This tournament allowed the student-athletes to work on their skills, prepare for the varsity level, and develop long-lasting friendships with their peers from other schools for the Deaf! ■



WPSD was thrilled to have Tribune-Review photojournalist Nate Smallwood on campus covering each basket of the 14th Annual Tri-State Middle School Basketball Tournament. He was incredibly invested in our School and students. Thank you to Nate and the Tribune-Review for an amazing story showcasing our teams and School!

WPSD was proud to host WTAE-TV on campus for the tournament as well. The School appreciates the hard work and effort of everyone at WTAE-TV to create such a positive segment on the students, staff and School. Community outreach at its best!



# Support for our School!

## Monthly Giving

### An Easy Way to Support Our Students!

You can make a difference every month! Investing in the achievement and success of the students at the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf is now easier and more affordable than ever through our monthly giving program.

WPSD offers the opportunity to make contributions automatically through a credit card. Monthly giving provides a convenient, individual, and affordable way to support the School and its students.

How can you begin to make a difference each month? Simply determine a donation that fits your budget - \$5, \$10, \$20, or more. For the amount of money you might spend on a pizza each month, a lunch date, or a night at the movies, you can impact the quality of the academic and extracurricular programs and services that the students receive at WPSD.

Becoming a monthly donor is simple and easy. Click on DONATE NOW and choose an amount and frequency that fits best within your budget and goals. Every donation is a tax deductible contribution. Your donations can be stopped at any time by contacting Matt Campion at [mcampion@wpsd.org](mailto:mcampion@wpsd.org). ■



## Join Us for the Fall Gala

Friday, October 6th  
from 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.  
at the Edgewood Country Club

Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf  
**AUCTION & GALA**

Contact Sarah Bartlebaugh for more information at 412.244.4207 or [sbartlebaugh@wpsd.org](mailto:sbartlebaugh@wpsd.org).