



WEST SENECA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

A VISION OF EXCELLENCE



Superintendent Matthew Bystrak's Weekly Brief

APRIL 29, 2022

HISTORY MAKING SPORTS

To Coach Maurino & East & West Girls Flag Football Team, thank you for making history last weekend! West Seneca high schools make up one of 12 WNY teams that are part of a Section VI flag football pilot program this year including Buffalo Academy of Science, Niagara Falls, Sweet Home, Depew, North Tonawanda, West Seneca West, Frontier, Amherst, Iroquois, Orchard Park and Hamburg. The pilot program was approved by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association in February, which sparked great interest among our students. The Buffalo Bills are sponsoring the WNY teams. A special thanks to left tackle Dion Dawkins and cornerback Siran Neal for stopping by! This is another great idea toward sports equity, whose time has come!



EAST SENIOR NHS INDUCTEES

East Senior recently inducted 52 juniors to the **National Honor Society**. These students will need to maintain a 90+ average, be leaders in our school and community and complete a minimum of 30 community service hours.



EAST & WEST SENIOR NTHS INDUCTEES

Congratulations to the following students for being inducted into the **National Technical Honor Society** with the Harkness, Kenton and Potter Career and Technical Centers. In order to qualify, these students had to meet rigorous academic and attendance requirements. The NTHS candidates had to maintain an 85% average at their respective schools and a 90% average in their Erie 1 BOCES career and technical education program. In addition, they were also required to submit letters of recommendations, undergo a formal interview and present a career portfolio before the NTHS screening committee. We are so incredibly proud of you! Congratulations to:

EAST SENIOR INDUCTEES



Brooke Guindon, Xavier Hausrath, Adam McCarthy, Mercedes Moran, Jacob Shamrock, Taylor Zak

WEST SENIOR INDUCTEES



Sadia Albanna, Elizabeth Archilla, Troy Brown, Gillian Catlin, Ixondra Cowles, Sean McCormick, Alanna Mitchell



Andrea Page, Mackenzie Quinn, Kaitlyn Reich, Austin Wagner, Dakota Wargo, Vanessa Wroblewski, Wyatt Zelle

STUDENTS OF EXCELLENCE CELEBRATED

On Wednesday, April 27th, a Students of Excellence dinner reception was held at Kloc's Banquet Room. The Students of Excellence Program, existing in both East and West High Schools, concentrates on student achievement and community participation. In its latest iteration, the crux of the program is the idea of citizenship, character, talents, morals, and ideals. The categories are as follows: Demonstrated Creativity, Work Ethic, Community Service, Artistic Performance, Personal Intellectual Development, Peer Leadership, Broadening Personal Horizons, Development of Character, Athletic Achievement, Communication Skills, Perseverance, Spirit of Entrepreneurship, School Citizenship, Career Preparation and Commitment. The goal of the West Seneca Students of Excellence program has been and will continue to be a celebration of the essence of students beyond their academic achievements. We salute our excellent scholar citizens!



EARTH DAY AT WINCHESTER POTTERS

At Winchester Potters last Friday evening, families came in to enjoy Earth Day activities that celebrated our earthly riches in music, literacy, art, and the environment!





MAY 4th FORUM

While we do our best to move on from the height of the pandemic, we are keenly aware of the myriad issues it may have caused our children. Prior to the cessation of in-person meetings, we had planned many community forums that were necessarily postponed. It is fitting that our first forum, taking place on Wednesday, May 4th, will address the social, emotional, and lifestyle issues our children may be experiencing as a result of the pandemic. Geared toward adult audiences, our Social Workers, School Counselors, and Psychologists will be present to speak with parents and caregivers about their concerns, while offering professional advice.

PARENT INFORMATION FORUM

*Has your child been struggling with getting back into a routine?
Spending too much time on social media?
Difficulty waking up in the morning?
Do you have concerns about your child's mental health?*

MAY 4TH 2022 - 6:30PM-8:00PM
WEST SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
3330 SENECA ST. - AUDITORIUM

Please join the District's Student Services Providers (Social Workers, School Counselors and Psychologists) in a discussion about the ways in which we can work together to support your children and provide additional resources for your family.

Refreshments will be provided. Audience members will be entered into a gift card raffle generously donated from the community.

Please note this evening is targeted for an adult audience.

A LOST CLASS RING & THE YEARBOOK PROJECT

A while back, [we told you about Daniel W. Berger](#), an alumnus of the West Seneca West Class of '73, who heads the West High Alumni Association. Dan is also the force behind the WSCSD Yearbook Project, which is housed in our local public library.

When our Community Relations Coordinator, Elena Cala, started work this past January, she was almost immediately presented with a lost men's class ring that belonged to someone in the Class of 1981. Someone had bought a house in West Seneca, found it there, and dropped it off at East Senior High School with no name, and no address of the recently purchased house. Earlier this week, Elena noticed very faint initials etched in the band of the ring. Consultations with West grad and Athletic Clerk, MaryKay Biddle, confirmed that the inscription read RJD.



Elena's first impulse was to tell Dan. The two met at the yearbook section of the library. There is no East '81 yearbook in the collection, so they looked in East 79 & 80, and sure enough, found a Ronald Diehl, Class of 1981. Dan is a skilled sleuth, but he does not have a Facebook account. Elena immediately found Ronald J Diehl, aka Red, on Facebook, and they knew they had a match!



High-fives ensued, and then Elena messaged Ronald via Facebook. Earlier, she had made a Facebook post about the whole mystery (minus Ron's name or photos). Right after Elena and Dan made their discovery, Amy George McGillicuddy, who knew Ron back in the day, posted on Facebook that she guessed who RJD was based on the year and the initials. She also texted Ron.

Ron called Elena. He asked if the stone was red, and the answer was yes. He said he hadn't seen the ring in 20 or 30 years and never expected to see it again. Ron thinks the ring was stolen along the way and then forgotten "because it wasn't worth much. Gold was expensive that year, so they used an alloy," he said. There is no equivalent to sentimental value, so Dan and Elena arranged to meet Ron and return his ring.



Ron was happy to be reunited with his ring. Living in the house his parents had purchased in the 1970s, where he waited at the nearest bus stop to go to school every day, the return of the ring was touching to him. "There's not that many things your parents give you that last," he said. "After such a long time, it's nice to have this ring back."

Ron offered to make a donation to the Yearbook Project, and Dan explained that all he is looking for is more yearbooks to fill in the gaps for certain years ([click here for the library database](#)). Word-of-mouth is everything in a campaign like this.

"This is the best use of social media *and* the Yearbook Project," Elena concluded. I agree!

Enjoy your weekend!

Matthew Bystrak
Superintendent