Totowa Titans

The Park Press

Washington Park School

Volume 20, Issue 3

Principal's Message: ***May 2026***

As the 2025–2026 school year draws to a close, we reflect with pride on the many successes our students have experienced both in and out of the classroom. This time of year brings not only closure, but also new beginnings, especially for our eighth grade students.

Our eighth grade students are preparing to celebrate several important milestones, including their Eighth Grade Dance, their final Student Appreciation Day, and, most notably, their Graduation. These events mark the culmination of their middle school journey, and we are incredibly proud of all they have accomplished. We wish them continued success as they move forward to high school.

For all of the Washington Park School students, this is a time to reflect and look ahead. We encourage everyone to continue developing the skills, habits, and mindset needed to make the next school year even more successful. Finishing the year strong, staying focused on academic goals, and maintaining the high expectations set by your teachers and administration which will help your continued success.

Congratulations to our eighth grade students, and best wishes to all of our students and families for a safe, restful, and enjoyable summer.

MONUMENTAL MEMORIES

By: Zahra Lions

Morgan Minieri

On April 16th, the Class of 2026 departed for their trip to Washington, D.C. The grade spent a total of two days and one night exploring the area. After five hours on the road, the group arrived at their first destination: the Pentagon City Mall, where students had the chance to eat, relax, and shop for souvenirs. After about an hour at the mall, everyone boarded the bus once again and headed to their next stop, Arlington National Cemetery. From there, the students continued their visit with a trolley tour through the cemetery, taking in the sights while learning about the history and significance of the grounds. Next, students got to see John F. Kennedy's grave site: a simple, elegant design featuring an eternal flame atop a granite, hillside plot, designed by architect John Carel Warnecke where he lies beside his wife and two children. Then, off to the last stop of the day was the long-awaited Changing of the Guards Ceremony. Students watched as the soldiers carried out the ceremony with respect to honor those who were lost in battle. To finish the eventful day, the group headed to the Medieval Times where students watched an exciting show, while rooting for the red and yellow knight. For dinner, students were given a medieval staple, tomato soup and garlic bread, chicken leg, roasted potato, corn, and an eclair for dessert.

The next morning students were woken up early for a breakfast buffet, after departing to their first stop of the day. Throughout the day, students explored the Korean War Memorial, the Abraham Lincoln Memorial, World War II Memorial, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, and the MLK Memorial. The rest of the day was spent at the American History Museum where students were able to eat lunch with $15 that was provided. After lunch, students were able to walk at their leisure through the museum to view artifacts of American History, including Old Glory.

Following lunch, the group prepped for their departure home, making sure to stop for dinner. Overall, the trip was an unforgettable experience and one that the entire eighth grade will remember for years to come.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WASHINGTON PARK HONOR STUDENTS

MARKING PERIOD 3

GRADE 4

A Honors

Ibtesam	Al Maaz
Azra	Alkaya
Emma	Anzaldi
Abigail	Breban
Jesse	Cedeno
Zeni	Curtis
Rocco	Cusumano
Francesco	Di Dio
Connor	Dingle
Isabella	Dominguez
Donovan	Elk
Daivik	Ghose
Devika	Ghose
Liam	Le
Andrew	Lopez
Madelyn	Minieri
Ayaan	Mohammed
Amira	Raza
Kane	Rickert
Joshua	Tierney
Nicholas	Varcadipane
Annabelle	Vargas
Ryan	Verney

B Honors

Tanisha	Ahmed
Albert	Breban
Jacob	Britting
Francesca	Buonocore
Zachary	Camacho
Mia	Castillo
Evelyn	Daniels
Rose	Dante
David	Fontanella
Ivan	Gragnaniello
Nico	Grant
Sebastian	Grullon
Mason	Guerriero
Jayden	Hurtado
Armaan	Kalsi-Miles
Mason	Kovarcik
Conner	MacDonald
Abel	Martinez
Omar	Merza
Mark	Minery
Jatniel	Molina
Safiyyah-Malak	Moudiab
Demetria	Nieto
Seren	Rodriguez
Farhan	Shawon
Sofia	Valencia
Noah	Valverde
Carlyn	Veras
Logan	Winters
Addyson	Wolfersberger
Aubrey	Wolfersberger
Roman	Yemets

GRADE 5

A Honors

Rania	Alfukaha
Eduardo	Chavez
Yosra	Hazin
Miaa	Lajara
Lina	Marmo
Lucas	Martinez
Walter	Mulroony
John	Peragallo
Sarah	Santiago
Jake	Szydlowski
Cole	Toledo
Emma	Troca
Llarissa	Velasquez

B Honors

Zaid	Abdelhay
Adyan	Ahmed
Jay	Alesandrelli
Yousef	Asad
Sheldon	Blaine
Francis	Borace
Aziyah	Bowden
Jonael	Caquias
Giovanni	Castaldo
Marco	Chavez
Samara	Chowdhury
Chandrika	Dey
Charleigh	Felix
Noah	Flores
Viviana	Gill
Everett	Haberman
Kyle	Henry
Alec	Infantolino
Kyin	Karam
Amelayah	Lamberty
Gregory	LaRose
Madison	Lopez
Sidra	Mannan
Aubrey	Matos
Amelia	Maturi
Erin	Morillo
Julianna	Newman
Nirvana	Nieves
Julian	Paulino
Dylann	Pena
Liliana	Percan
Lissy	Ramirez
Katherine	Rosiello
Sienna	Saleh
Maximus	Santos
Sophia	Sawyer
Humaira	Sultana
Anna	Sutula
Emma	Varcadipane
Heilyn	Vargas Cobo
Jayden	Vasquez
Jordyn	Wright
Martina	Zea Quinceno

GRADE 6

A Honors

Tala	Dandis
Zenaida	Davila
Gioselynn	Delgado
Charles	Farrell
Emely	Genao Cortorreal
Alessia	Jurlina
Aubrey	Lippman
Adriana	Montuori
Nicholas	Nozka
Aria	Pereira
Gabriella	Persaud
Santiago	Sebastiani
Daniella	Stroh
Nicholas	Vancheri

B Honors

Zayan	Ali
Matteo	Barattin
Rylan	Britting
Faith	Brown
Shaila	Choudhury
Tanisha	Chowdhury
Anjaly	Cilarayan Horna
Colton	Dingle
Jayden	Fernandez

The Park Press

Samantha Granados
Kush Kanani
Savannah Lions
Nicholas Lowack
Lilianna Madrid
MiaMaria Massola
Alia McGlynn
Mariana Merza
Lucas Minery
Ishaan Mohammed
Haley Rexach
Dante Reynoso
Gianna Rivera
Brandon Rosado
Ava Torsiello
Mackenzie Varcadipane
Gabriel Vera

GRADE 7

A Honors

Lujain Ayyoush
Julia Bladek
Erva Cevik
Ella Deleon
Anabela Kovacheva
Eliana Lopez
Jeneen Obeidallah
Amanda Olpindo
Jake Percan
Abigail Perez
Mehnaz Rahman
Saulo Ramos
Kylee Valverde
Elizabeth Veliz
Katherine Veliz

B Honors

Maite Barraza
Pier Becka
Dominic Borgese
Delilah Buonocore
Brian Cappadonna
Daniela Castillo Cruz
Analiz Coste Tavarez
Lilianna D'Amico
Ilay Dinler
Iltay Dinler
Amila DiSanti
Giselle Esa
Angel Estrella
Ava Flores
Nicolo Garcia
Leo Gourley
Robert Grambone
Olivia Henry
Britney Ibrahim
Alexander Jimenez
Gabriella Molina
Ian Moore
Dariel Morel
Jane Mulroony
Emilia Nestorovski
Juliet Ortiz
Adriana Pietraccini
Mason Pommells
Massiel Rodriguez
Mizael Rodriguez
Domenica Romaniello
Noah Salazar
Kayla Schiavo
Mason Schultz
David Sidoroski
Raina Toska
Adam Urban

GRADE 8

A Honors

Yverlin Alvarez Vargas
Kasper Bajek
Natalia Bajek
Marina Barbiere
Nathaniel Bladek
Jayden Castillo
Frank Conca
Jake Conde
Caleigh Dalida
Scarlett Fisher
Carmelina Grambone
Valeria Granados
Michael Greco
Andy Guilliani
Ghazelle Huzien
Ava Juliano
Kadin Karam
Isabella LaRose
Zahra Lions
Liam Marthone
MaKenna Mazur
Morgan Minieri
Stephania Ochoa
Brian Olivo
Lyanna Puerta
Chelsy Ramirez
Ayrton Rodriguez
Kayla Salinas
Ryan Scheck
Joseph Siecieska
Sofia Szydlowski
Patrick Verney

B Honors

Ariel Alvarado Quiche
Omar Asad
Rafael Balaguer
Kayla Bruno
James Cabezas
Rianna Ceka
Jennifer Colon
Raelynn Corentin
Nashly Coste Tavarez
Isabella Di Blasio
Aaron Diaz
Amaia Diaz
Ellenise Dominguez
Kaylee Gallardo
Melvin Gonzalez Campos
Kenan Gulistan
Lyedia Gutekunst
Mohammed Hammad
Maddox Heerema
Frank Iurato
Brandon Klitch
Eleana Lehr
Brianna Lezcano
Kayla Lora
Ryan Maxwell
Luka Mladenovic
Sophia Molina
Aliyah Morgan
Catalina Padilla
Kevin Puglise
Milania Rios
Gianni Rodriguez
Abigail Salvador
Olivia Torres
Aubrey Vasquez

A TALE AS OLD AS TIME

By: Lyanna Puerta

Sofia Syzdlowski

This year's school play at Washington Park School was performed wonderfully by all the students onstage! Students in grades five through eight were given the chance to audition and play a part in this year's spring musical, *Beauty and the Beast.* This musical is traditionally about a young girl named Belle, who's seen as an outcast of her village. When her father is imprisoned by a beast, she trades places with him. Over the course of her imprisonment, with the help of several enchanted objects, the two fall in love. Suddenly, Gaston, someone who wanted to marry Belle, storms into the castle to "save" her. The Beast gets fatally injured, and Belle's act of true love reverts him back to his true form as a prince.

The cast of the show had been practicing several days after school since January to make this show the best it can be. This year's director was Ms. Di Dio, and the music director was Mr. Carl, and they did an awesome job putting this production together. All the students involved, on and off stage, tried their hardest, both during practices and the performances, to make sure this production was amazing for all those attending.

Washington Park School's staff and students look forward to next year's production.

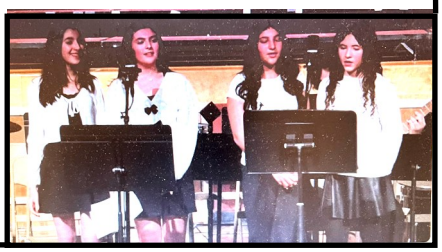
A NOTE-WORTHY NIGHT

By: Sofia Szydlowski

This year's Unplugged Concert was yet another success! The night started off strong with the senior chorus and Mr. Bates preforming "Blue Skies" by Irving Berlin and "Hit the Road Jack" by Ray Charles.

Following them were the solos and small groups, beginning with Ryanna Espinosa singing "Killing Me Softly" by Fugees. Next was Gieselle Esa, Ryanna Espinosa, Emilia Nestorovski, and Adriana Pietraccini singing "You Stole the Show" by Sienna Spiro. Then, "No Good Deed" by Stephen Schwartz was sung with Giselle Esa, Emilia Nestorovski, and Adriana Pietraccini, followed by Isabella LaRose, Savannah Lions, Zahra Lions, and Morgan Mineri singing "Die on this Hill" by Sienna Spiro. Finally, "Piano Man" was performed by the duo of Aaron Diaz on the piano and Aliyah Morgan singing.

The senior band and Mr. Carl then took the stage with "Pink Panther" by Henry Mancini and "Subway Surfers" by Mikkel Smitt. Overall, the night was a huge success, filled with music, talent, and fun.



Thank you to all staff who contributed and volunteered their time at the event.

LEGENDARY LEGENDS

By: Lyanna Puerta

Sofia Szydlowski

This year's annual Battle of the Books was a huge success for Totowa! Since September, everyone on the teams from grades four through eight had been preparing for the big day.

The "battle" was held at Lincoln Middle School, Hawthorne. Anywhere from 9 to 15 teams competed in each event. Battle of the Books is a popular reading incentive program designed to encourage reading. Teams read from a prepared list of books and compete in trivia-style "battles" to test their knowledge.

Fourth grade brought home bronze as third place. Fifth grade got first, bringing Totowa the first gold of the year with fifty-six points. They got two out of three questions in the playoffs right, so their studying paid off. Sixth grade got second place. Seventh, although not placing, had a great run during the competition. Eighth grade got first place, with seventy-two points, winning by a landslide.

Overall, this year, every team in Battle of the Books did great and will surely do great again next year!

THE PERFECT SET

By: Marina Barbiere

This year's girls' volleyball team was special. "The best team I have ever coached," according to Mr. D'Amelio, the head coach. The team consisted of sixteen girls, and eight of them were eighth grade students. The league that the volleyball team is a part of is the Greater Morris County Junior School Coaches Association. Their record was 9-4, with their only losses being to their rivals, Mendham and Florham Park. Mr. D'Amelio's favorite part of the season was morning practices and games. The team built many new bonds and memories that will last forever, no matter if these girls are playing in high school or not.

Out of all the girls, the player that scored the highest number of points was Caleigh Dalida. She scored a total of ninety-one points. This year the girls set a goal from day one, being the first team in the program to make it to the championship. Despite many challenges, they did it! They fell just short, but the amount of effort that went into this year doesn't go unnoticed.

The goal for next year, according to the coach, is to win it and to keep the team working harder. Throughout the year every single player improved. Everyone knew their role on the team and perfectly executed it. Everyone gave 100% this year on the court during practice and in games and always picked each other up. This year team will be missed truly, but all the girls have a bright future in front of them.

MEET THE TEAM:

Marina Barbiere	London Guerrero
Rianna Ceka	Ava Juliano
Nashly Coste	Gabriella Molina
Caleigh Dalida	Lydiana Nunez
Valeria Granados	Kayla Salinas

MEET THE COACH:

Mr. D'Amelio

MEET THE LINE JUDGE:

Waleska Gonzalez

MEET THE SCORE KEEPERS:

Raelynn Corentin

Aubrey Vasquez

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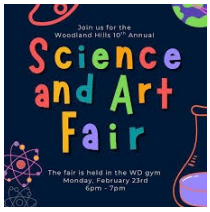


PREVENTING CLIMATE CHANGE

WHILE SHOWCASING ART

By: Kayla Bruno

On April 1, 2026, two events took place during and after school hours. It was the Art Show/Science Fair. Different types of paintings and drawings were hung about on one half of the gym, with tables full of art creations such as clay and plaster projects. On the other side of the gym, rows of tables were lined up for the Eighth Grade Science Fair. The tables had projects that incorporated hand-made models of what can be done to help reduce greenhouse gases and prevent climate change.

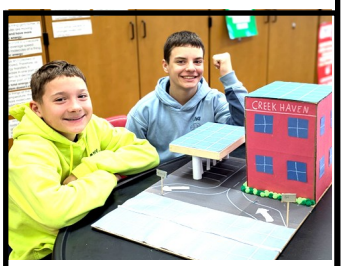
The art show was a mix of both Washington Park and Memorial School. The theme of it was American History. The plastered objects were icons that represent America; an example is the White House or a football.

Each eighth grade student participated in creating unique models for the science fair, and they all poured hard work into them. Three projects were selected by judges, who were the teachers here at Washington Park. For first place, Ryan Scheck and Patrick Verney were picked, with Casper Bajek and Nathaniel Bladek close in second. In third place was a tie between Joey Siecieska and Ayrton Rodriguez, and Ava Juliano and MaKenna Mazur. Ryan Scheck and Patrick Verney's project was Centralized Composting, Casper Bajek and Nathaniel Bladek's project was about Social Roadways and EV cars. Joey Siecieska and Ayrton Rodriguez worked on Reduced Logging in Boreal Forests. Lastly, Ava Juliano and MaKenna Mazur had a project on Hydropower. All in all, it was a very productive and eventful day!

Ryan Scheck and Patrick Verney

Joseph Siecieska and Ayrton Rodriguez

Ava Juliano and MaKenna Mazur



Kasper Bajek and Nathaniel Bladek

ADVISOR—Ms. Doreen Peranio

NEWSPAPER STAFF:

Marina Barbiere	Zahra Lions	Lyanna Puerta
Kayla Bruno	Morgan Minieri	Sofia Szydlowski

This newspaper staff represents the students from different class periods who sacrificed recess time to learn the journalism and process-writing skills that were taught during this time period, ending with this actual newspaper publication. Thank you to all WPS staff members who cooperated with the newspaper staff by giving of their time and interviews. The staff very much enjoyed their introduction to the world of newspaper writing.