

The

Chalkboard

A Report from the Wattsburg Area Schools

2006/2007 School Year

June 2007

<http://www.wattsburg.org>

Dr. Rosalie Constantine Retires



Dr. Rosalie Constantine

taught English at the Canandaigua Senior Academy in Canandaigua, New York and the Mt. Morris Central School in Mt. Morris, New York. She also served as the English Department Chairperson at Villa Maria Academy and as Assistant Principal of Fort LeBoeuf High School.

As Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Constantine was responsible for restructuring the entire educational program and curriculum from kindergarten through grade twelve. As a result of her efforts, Wattsburg's schools now have a curriculum which reflects the state's standards and insures that every graduate is well prepared to pursue the career of his/her choice. Dr. Constantine has also been instrumental in developing ongoing assessment plans which result in the continuous improvement of the district's educational programs and directly contribute to the academic success of students in the Wattsburg Area School District. Her work to enhance the Gifted Program and oversee the district's federal programs has also resulted in great benefits for the district and its students.

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Congratulations, Class of 2007!

Baccalaureate services for Seneca High School's Class of 2007 will be held on Sunday, June 3, at 7:00 p.m. in the high school auditorium. Dr. Timothy Good will be the guest speaker. Graduation ceremonies will take place on Friday, June 8, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. Class speakers are as follows:

Daniel R. Brennan, son of Daniel and Linda Brennan, will be the Seneca High School Class of 2007 Valedictorian. Daniel has been recognized for his academic success throughout his tenure at Seneca High School. Daniel has consistently made the Principal's Honor Roll and has been a member of the National Honor Society since his sophomore year; serving as President during his senior year.

Daniel has also been an active member of the Student Council each year and served on the executive board during his junior and senior years.

Throughout his high school years, Daniel has been a member of the Science Olympiad and took part in Penn State Behrend's Chemistry Day Competition during his junior year. Seneca won the Chemistry Day contest that year. Daniel has also been a member of the French Club (grades 10-12) and the Academic Decathlon (grade 12).

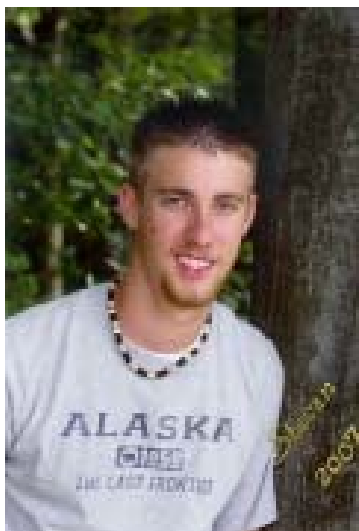


*Daniel Brennan,
Valedictorian*

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Class of 2007

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*Steven Rzepka
Salutatorian*

In addition to his academic pursuits, Daniel was also a student athlete. He was a member of the Cross Country team while he was a freshman, played Soccer (grades 10-12), and was on the Track and Field Team for all four years of high school.

Daniel plans to attend Allegheny College in the fall. He will be majoring in Physics.

Steven Jeffrey Rzepka, son of Jeff and Brenda Rzepka, will be the Seneca High School Class of 2007 Salutatorian. Steven has been recognized for his outstanding academic success, receiving the Principal's Honor Roll each year at Seneca, as well as having been a member of the National Honor Society (grades 10-12). Steven has also taken part in Regional Choice Initiative Dual Enrollment Program and has attended classes through Edinboro University as part of his class schedule at Seneca High School.

Steven has volunteered his time serving as a peer mentor through Seneca Solutions, and at WAEC Field Days (grades 10-12). He was responsible for the design and construction of "Audrey II" for the Spring 2007 Musical, *The Little Shop of Horrors*. Steven has also been Greene Township Leo Club "Student of the Month" recipient, and recognized by WJET-TV as a "Good Kid."

As a member of Student Council (11-12), Steven served in the capacity of President during his senior year. He has also served as the Junior Class Vice-President. As part of the Science Olympiad (grade 11), Steven served as the Captain of Seneca's winning team at the Penn State Behrend's Chemistry Day Competition (grade 11). Steven has also been a member of the Ski Club (grades 9-10), Varsity Soccer (grades 9-10), and JV Baseball (grade 9).

Steven plans to attend the University of New Hampshire, majoring in Environmental Sciences. He also plans to pursue his Master's Degree in Environmental Sciences.



*Anita Marie Smith
Faculty Choice Speaker*

Anita Marie Smith will be the Faculty Choice Speaker for the Class of 2007. Anita is the daughter of Donald and Kimberly Smith. She has been a National Honor Society member and Student Council member (grades 10-12). She has served as the Student Council Secretary during her senior year. Anita has also been recognized for her academic success, consistently making the honor roll and high honor roll (grades 9-12).

Anita has participated in Track and Field (grades 10-11) and was the Track and Field Team Manager during her senior year. She has been a football cheerleader (grades 11-12) and a basketball cheerleader (grade 12), receiving the Miss 100% Award for cheerleading, the Most Improved Cheerleader Award, Personal Best Cheerleader Award, and Most Outstanding Cheerleader Award. These awards allowed her to attend CheerHawaii USA during the summer of 2006. Anita was also voted 2006 Homecoming Queen.

Anita has also participated in the Science Olympiad during her freshman and sophomore years, and also took part in Penn State Behrend's Chemistry Day Competition during her junior year. She has volunteered her time to programs such as the WAEC Field Days, WAMS First Aid Days, and LEO Club (grades 9-12). She received recognition from the Leo Club as the March 2007 Student of the Month. Anita has also served as the Vice-President of the Leo Club.

Additionally, Anita has been a member of the Recycling Club (grade 9), and has received National Fitness Awards (grades 9-11).



*Eric Kiehlmeier
Class Choice Speaker*

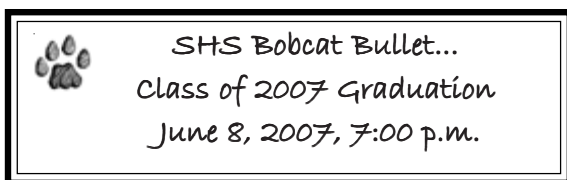
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Seneca's Science and Health Academy visits Hamot Medical Center

Thirty students in the Science and Health Academy at Seneca High School visited Hamot Medical Center on Wednesday, May 2, 2007. Students were given a first hand look at a variety of medical career opportunities. Students toured the physical therapy, occupational therapy and the respiratory departments as well as the radiology, pharmacy and various nursing departments. They were able to meet and speak with a number of professionals working in these areas. In doing so they learned the "behind the scenes" aspects of some careers such as required training, average salaries, and opportunities for advancement. Students also learned about a variety of medical equipment used, such as a mechanical robot which sorts medications in the hospital's pharmacy department. Also, students had the opportunity to study many types of X-rays and MRI scans while touring the radiology department.



Photo: Emily Yaple, 9th grade, and Samantha Sommers, 10th grade, study an X-ray in the radiology department at Hamot Medical Center



Class of 2007

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Anita plans to attend the Pittsburgh Technical Institute in the fall. She will be majoring in Architectural Drafting.

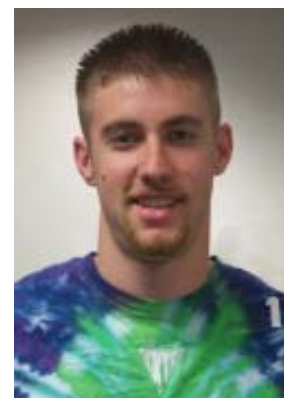
Eric Kiehlmeier, son of Dan and Gerry Kiehlmeier, will be the Seneca Class of 2007, Class Choice Speaker. Eric has consistently made the Honor Roll throughout his years at Seneca. He has also been named Who's Who Among High School Students. Eric's scores on the Pennsylvania State Systems of Assessment (PSSA), are among the state's highest

Eric has been a member of the Volleyball Club, and has receive National Fitness Awards. He has volunteered his time as the 2006-07 morning student announcer. He enjoys camping, swimming, and spending time with this family and girlfriend. In addition to his academic classes, Eric has worked as a stock clerk at Quality Markets for three years.

Eric pans to enlist in the United States Coast Guard after graduating high school.

Steven Rzepka - Good Kid!

Seneca High School senior, Steven Rzepka, was recently featured as a recipient of WJET-TV's "Good Kid" recognition. Steven was nominated for his exceptional work on projects for the high school's production of *Little Shop of Horrors* as well as his dedication and hard work on his academics and service to the school and community. At Seneca, Steven is actively involved as Student Council president and is a member of National Honor Society. He is also involved in 4-H and holds a part time job at Wegmans. Steven has also been recognized as a Lion's Club student of the month and has earned several academic scholarships. In his spare time, Steven enjoys hunting, archery, and wildlife photography. After graduation, Steven plans to pursue a degree in Environmental Engineering at the University of New Hampshire.



Steven Rzepka

Real Estate Tax Installments

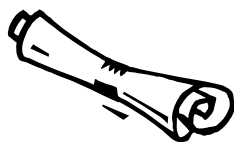
Recently, the Board of Education adopted a resolution that will allow all property tax owners to pay their property tax in three (3) equal installment payments beginning next school year. A taxpayer choosing to pay under the installment plan will pay the face amount of the tax bill and is not entitled to any discount. The process will begin with the 2007 school district property tax bills that will be sent out on August 1, 2007.

To initiate the installment payment process, you should pay the first installment amount printed on your tax bill. **Important:** The first installment payment must be made and/or postmarked no later than August 31st. Once your local Tax Collector has received your first installment payment, he/she will mail you two (2) installment coupons which you will include with your appropriate installment payment due on September 30th and October 31st.

If your installment payment is late on either September 30th and/or October 31st, you must add an additional 10% penalty to the late installment payment. Two late payments will render the taxpayer ineligible to participate in installment payments for the following school year.

The following are excluded from real estate installment payments:

- Interim school property taxes
- Delinquent school property taxes



Dr. Constantine Retires

Continued from page 1

Thanks to Dr. Constantine's efforts, Wattsburg's schools now rank among the top achieving schools in the region and have been recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education for academic excellence.

When accepting her resignation with regret, Wattsburg's Board of School Directors recognized Dr. Constantine's dedication and commitment in her distinguished career and expressed sincere thanks for her many contributions.

Community Support Needed

At the May 21, 2007 meeting, Wattsburg's Board of School Directors approved a resolution supporting new legislation which has been introduced into Pennsylvania's House of Representatives. House Bill 446, introduced by Representative Karen Beyer, seeks to relieve the financial burden on school districts created by cyber charter schools.

Current laws require the Wattsburg Area School District to pay \$7,228.00 per student to cyber charter schools which enroll a student who lives in the school district. The cost sky rockets to \$11,201.00 if the student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The district's payments to cyber charter schools over the past five years exceed \$650,000 and will soon require nearly .5 mills of tax to cover the costs. Without this burden, no tax increase would be required to balance the school district's budget for the 2007-08 school year.

The resolution adopted by the board encourages all community members to contact their state legislators, especially Representative Curt Sonney at (814) 897-2080 or (717) 783-9087, and to ask for support of House Bill 446.

If enacted, the bill would significantly reduce school district costs by requiring the Pennsylvania Department of Education to be responsible for the funding of cyber charter schools, rather than local school districts.

The legislation would also require new operational standards for cyber charter schools which would begin to make them more accountable to the taxpayers who provide the funding for cyber charters.

Please contact Representative Sonney, a member of the House Education Committee, and other legislators to encourage their support of this bill. Further information about House Bill 446 can be obtained at www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/session/cfm.

Search for New Superintendent Begins

As Superintendent Frank Bova enters the final year of his contract and has announced his intent to retire within the next school year, the Board of School Directors has begun a search for the next superintendent of the Wattsburg Area School District. The Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) will assist the district in conducting the search. The search process will include input from community members and all staff members during the coming months. Interested candidates should consult the PSBA web site at www.psba.org.

Engineering Career Academy at State Behrend

On April 18, 2007, the Engineering Career Academy at Seneca High School explored the possibilities in the fields of plastics engineering, mechanical engineering and civil engineering first-hand at Penn State Behrend. Students toured the entire Behrend campus and also learned about the college admissions process. The idea of taking college prep and honors level courses in *all* subjects during high school, in order to be more successful in any college major, especially engineering, was reinforced by the Behrend staff. In addition, all students participated in hands-on activities with Behrend engineering professors. Students were able to make “super balls” out of liquid glass and learned the processes involved in making plastic products. Also, students designed and assembled bridges as they discussed the concepts involved in civil engineering. The entire day focused on what college life is like, as well as what to expect in the life of an engineer.

Ninth grade student, Ryan Nies, said the experience, “made (him) want to be an engineer even more than before.”

Seneca guidance counselors, Miss Linda Ricci and Mr. Tim Malinowski chaperoned and also participated in the hands-on activities.



Seneca students build a bridge at Behrend as an exercise in civil engineering.

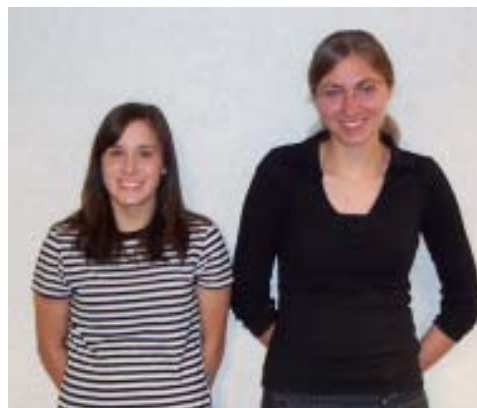


Brian Hall, grade 11, Richie Widdowson, grade 11, Brad Cook, grade 9, Justin Starvaggi grade 11, Ryan Johnson grade 10, and Matt Whitton, grade 9, by stand presses in the Plastics Technology lab.



Seneca Juniors Participate in the Penn State Summer WISE Program

Two Seneca Juniors, Tatyana Borisenko and Jill Koehler, will be attending college classes this summer at Penn State Behrend through the “Women In Science and Engineering” (WISE) program. The students qualified for the program by meeting the PSAT/SAT score and grade point average requirements and recommendation of their counselor. The WISE program runs from June 11 through July 27, and allows high school juniors to participate in various college classes as well as participation in a one-credit career exploration and college preparation seminar. Students will explore careers in Science, Chemistry, Health Care and Engineering, as well as learning test-taking strategies, writing skills and study techniques through workshops, field trips and lectures. Ms. Oslak, Jr. Guidance Counselor, states, “Tatyana and Jill have been working hard all year and this is another great example of opportunities Seneca students who excel in their Academies can take advantage of.”



Jill Koehler and Tatyana Borisenko

Wattsburg Retirees Boast over 150 Years of Service



Mrs. Shelia Brainard



Mr. Ron Derner



Mrs. Chris Krol



Mrs. William Hoffman

Mrs. Shelia Brainard was ten years old when she knew she wanted to be a teacher. Twelve years later her goal became reality. She taught for two years in Charleston, SC and has taught for 33 years in Wattsburg Area School District. Wattsburg is not just a place to work for Mrs. Brainard. Up until last year, the Wattsburg Area School District was also home since Mrs. Brainard has lived in the district where her children have attended Wattsburg schools, participated in many activities and graduated from Seneca.

Mrs. Brainard's future plans center around her family. Along with her husband, David, she will finish some projects that were started since they've had their new home built. They will be creating a yard and building a back deck. Mrs. Brainard will also keep busy as Grammy. She will spend time with her daughter, Trudy, and son-in-law, Marc, a teacher in North East, who have three children: Bella who is four, Trent who is two, and Janelle who is six months. Mrs. Brainard will also travel during the winter months to visit her daughter, Chrissy, and her husband, Jeff, in Virginia. Jeff is a police officer for Chesterfield County and Chrissy is a Record Specialist for the same police department. Mrs. Brainard will be sure to observe the speed limits.

Time will also be spent with her son, Dave, who is a snowboard instructor at the Peak. He is currently working for FBI Landscaping and his plans involve moving out west, where the snowboarding season is even longer. Mrs. Brainard will be visiting him during the summer months.

Mrs. Brainard's life changed drastically on November 27, 2002 when God took Mrs. Brainard's daughter, Kimberly. Kimberly was a sophomore at Mercyhurst college majoring in elementary/special education. Both present and former students and families of Mrs. Brainard, her own children's friends, colleagues, administrators, and neighbors helped at that most difficult time of Mrs. Brainard's life. She appreciates that all these friends prayed, brought food, visited, sent cards, donated money to Kim's scholarship fund, delivered Christmas cookies, and continue to pray for her and her family. She feels that out of that tragedy came blessing after blessing for which she is forever grateful.

As Mrs. Brainard closes her classroom door, she has faith that God continues to have a plan for her, hope for today's youth, and love that has been bestowed on her by God, her family, her children's friends, her students, and her Wattsburg family.

Mr. Ronald Derner was born in the Wattsburg area and graduated from Wattsburg Area High School. Upon graduating from Edinboro State College with a degree in elementary education, Mr. Derner began his teaching career at Wattsburg Area Middle School as a substitute teacher. At the end of the Vietnam War, he joined the U.S. Navy and married his wife, Diane. After his tour of active service, Mr. Derner returned to Wattsburg, where he resumed his teaching career. He taught Social Studies for grades 6 and 7, for 36 ½ years, coached football, basketball, track, and cross country. He and his wife raised two children. Their son is a financial compliance officer for Cummins Diesel in Jamestown, NY, and their daughter is the MBP Coordinator at Youngstown State University. Mr. Derner and his wife have 4 grandchildren, soon to be 5!

The one question Mr. Derner says he is often asked is, "Are students today different from when you first started teaching?" Mr. Derner replies that, "The students are still the same. The only difference is that students today have more material things and are exposed to many outside influences that they are not ready

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Seneca's Summer School Program

Summer school sign ups have begun for the 2007 session. Areas of instruction scheduled for this year's program are Social Studies, Math, Science, English, and Health/P.E., and will be taught by certified teachers in these areas. Students who earned a 61-69% final grade in one of these course areas during the 2006-2007 school year can enroll in the program. The 2-week program was developed to generate a more individualized remediation program for students to better their skills in deficient areas and to be able to earn the course credit they failed to earn during the school year.

Courses will be offered in content areas as long as a minimum of 6 students sign-up for that particular content area. Coursework for the program will include tests, projects, quizzes, as well as a final exam. The final average will be an average between the summer school final grade and the course final grade, which must be 70% or better to earn the credit for the course. Students are expected to attend every session and students who miss 2 days, without administrative approval, will be dropped from the program without refund. Transportation to the site (Seneca High School) for summer school is the student's responsibility.

The dates for the program are Monday, July 9, 2007 through Friday, July 20, 2007, and will run from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Cost for this program is \$120 and must be paid upon registration. Students can only sign-up for one content area per year. Sign-ups are occurring in the guidance office.

Wattsburg Retirees

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to handle at the middle school level. The solution is still a good solid family. Students look to teachers to be role models, I hope that I was a good one. I am proud of all the students that I helped prepare for this world.”

Mrs. Chris Krol has taught in the Wattsburg Area School District since 1972. This has been her 35th year of teaching. Mrs. Krol feels her teaching career has been a very rewarding experience. She has had the opportunity to teach children whose parents she has taught. Some of her former students have chosen teaching as their careers also. For Mrs. Krol, it is an exceptional, precious moment when a former student visits her at school or just says hello when they see her in the community. She feels very blessed.

As Mrs. Krol starts a new phase of her life through retirement, she plans on spending more time with her family and friends. She would also like to take a few cooking and gardening classes. She is planning on traveling not only by car, but also by motorcycle, plane, and boat. Since she will have some extra time, Mrs. Krol will be able to do some volunteer work at her church. She plans to enjoy reading a few good books that have been sitting on her shelves for quite some time. She also will continue spending time working in her flower beds and garden. Mrs. Krol says she will take each day as it comes and live it to its fullest.

Mr. William Hoffman has taught Health and Physical Education for 31½ years at Seneca High School. Along with teaching, he coached Track and Field and Football, both JV and Varsity. Mr. Hoffman is looking forward to spending more time with his wife and family.

Mrs. Jeanni Sanden worked for Wattsburg School District for 15 years in house-keeping. Mrs. Sanden says she will enjoy spending more time with her grandchildren, but misses the interaction with staff and students. (Photo not available.)



Mr. Keith Miller
SHS Assistant Principal

Welcome, Mr. Miller

Wattsburg Area School District welcomes Mr. Keith Miller, Seneca High School's new Assistant Principal. Mr. Miller earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Secondary English from Edinboro University. He also received his Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction and his Administrative Certification from Gannon University.

Mr. Miller taught English for 9 years at McDowell Intermediate High School. He directed several theater productions and coached Boys' Junior Varsity Soccer while at McDowell.

Mr. Miller's hobbies include starting (and eventually finishing) various construction projects around the house, camping, chopping wood, running, and coaching, or helping with the various activities in which his children participate.

Mr. Miller and his wife, Maria, have three children, ages 13, 11, and 8.

Penny Wars at WAMS

The old saying “*A penny saved is a penny earned*” took on new meaning at WAMS from April 30 through May 4, when students held a Penny War. A Penny War is a fun and competitive way to collect funds for charity. The event pits each classroom against the other to see who can “out-penny” the other. In the end, everybody wins because the more money collected, the better.

WAMS students reached into their pockets, sofa cushions, and clothes dryers to collect over \$1500 which was donated to the Red Cross and also used to make Care Packages for our military serving overseas.

Mr. Rob Hart’s homeroom accumulated the highest homeroom total—\$168.77, while Mr. Ellicott’s homeroom pulled together the largest number of pennies, \$65.78.

While all grade levels fully participated in this spirited competition, Grade 5 amassed the greatest overall total of \$468.39. “This was a great way to help others and have fun at the same time,” said 6th grade student Trevor Beiter.



*Left to right, front row: Katelyn Rastatter, Ashley Kowle, Justin DeCoursey
Back row: Mr. Ellicott, Mr. Hart, Katie Burbules*

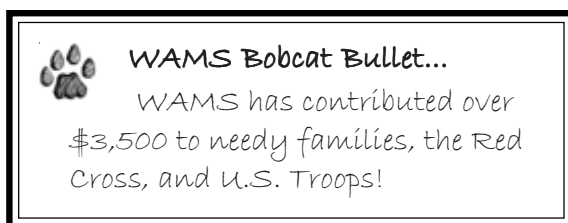
Pawsitive Energy Program

Can you feel the positive energy flowing from the Middle School?

It is a strong force this year. The faculty, staff, and students at the Middle School have been participating in a new program. It is called the Pawsitive Energy Program, and it has been a big success.

The goals of the program are to create a positive environment within the school community, to promote citizenship, to reward excellence in academics, and to encourage appropriate behaviors. The students are rewarded with a paw paper cutout when they are seen demonstrating the desired goals. They sign the cutout and drop it into the PAW box at the office. At the beginning of the new month, seventeen cutouts are drawn. The winning students are awarded prizes such as MP3 players, board games, and gift certificates.

We are excited to be able to continue this program next year. It has been a “pawsitive” experience for all! The teachers have enjoyed being good finders, and the students have enjoyed being found!



SeaWolves

WAMS students were treated to a visit from a member of the Erie SeaWolves baseball team on May 2. Jeff Larish, first baseman for the SeaWolves, spoke to the students about his experiences as a first year baseball player. He stressed hard work and dedication as key components to attaining one’s goals.

On May 3, fifth and sixth grade students watched the SeaWolves play and had the chance to cheer for Larish. Grades 7 and 8 attended a game on May 17.

Accompanying Larish was Jason Bologna, a sales intern for the Erie team.

Dream Flag Project

Many classes at the elementary center participated in the Dream Flag Project, which is a national poetry/art/community connection project for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The project is inspired by the poetry of Langston Hughes and the tradition of Nepalese Buddhist prayer flags. On a fabric flag, children in participating classes drew and wrote about one of their important dreams. Ms. Julie Nies, who first shared the project with the faculty, organized two school-wide assemblies in the auditorium where children read their dreams aloud. In the background, all of the dream flags from each class hung suspended from the walls. Later, the flags were on display in the concourse of the Millcreek Mall.

Keely Law - Platinum Medal Winner

Keely Law, third grade student at Wattsburg Elementary, earned the "Platinum Medal" for rope jumping. This is the fourth medal earned by Keely this year. She has already completed her bronze, silver, and gold medals. Each level requires five or six different skills and a set number of jumps to be completed. Students must perform each skill with proficiency. This high level of achievement is unusual for a third grader to accomplish. We are very proud of Keely's fine athletic work. Congratulations!



Keely Law



Mr. Pearce and Rachel Nye

Mr. Don Pearce Golden Apple Award Winner

Fourth grader Rachel Nye and her family nominated her teacher, Mr. Don Pearce, for the Golden Apple Award. Rachel, her mom, her dad, and her sister were on hand to present the award to Mr. Pearce on Wednesday, April 11th. Rachel said of Mr. Pearce, "He makes learning fun!"



The American Dream

The American Dream

Under the direction of elementary music teacher Mrs. Lesley Lopez, the third and fourth grade classes gave outstanding performances of the musical play, "The American Dream." This musical play was a celebration of our early American heritage. Fifty-five historical characters came to life in scenes that included our country's first explorers, the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and the Civil War.

The Chalkboard

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