

Watchung Post

Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

NJ

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**WHRHS
DRAMA DEPT
PRESENTS
'PETER PAN'**

**NOVEMBER
17, 18 & 19**
7 p.m.

**SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 19**
2 pm matinee

**WHRHS
Performing
Arts Center**

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2016 NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) continued its record of exceptional achievement by students in the National Merit Scholarship Program, seeing 10 students in the Class of 2017 named Semifinalists.

"The National Merit results are wonderful achievements for our students and the entire school community," said WHRHS Principal George Alexis. "With a sustained focus on inquiry and high expectations, we remain committed to helping all students actualize their potential."

Looking back over the previous two years, six WHRHS students earned the Semifinalist recognition in the Class of 2016, and 11 in the Class of 2015. All six Semifinalists in the Class of 2016 went on to be named Finalists, and in 2015 nine of the Semifinalists were subsequently named Finalists.

This year's nationwide 16,000 National Merit Semifinalists were named on Wednesday, Sept. 14, by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). The students had achieved the honor based on their scores on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) taken by 1.6 million juniors last fall.

In addition to Semifinalists, National Merit also named 36 WHRHS students in a category just before semifinalist, recognized as "Commended."

The Class of 2017 WHRHS National Merit Semifinalists are: Karthik Irakam, Natalie Kim, Daniel Lee, Jonathan Rich, Caroline Rucker, Michelle Shui, Gavin Van Skiver, Nicole Wang, Jenny Yan, and Joyce Zhou.

The Class of 2017 Commended students are: Amrutha Ajjarapu, Alison M. Burman, Emily H. Chen, Sahil N. Deo, Jonathan Dong, Nicole M. Freire, Haley G. Frey, Rachel M. Han, Ang-Ting Ho, Amy X. Holz, Katrina N. Howard, Sonali A. Howe, Tea Kingley, Nicholas Kong, Annabel Kopell, Ryan M. Krakower, Kevin L. Lu, Lindsay C. Muller, Arielle E. Ostry, Vineet A. Parikh, Rachel S. Printz, Mary V. Rall, Thomas



(above) Ten Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) students in the Class of 2017 have been named semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program. WHRHS Principal George Alexis, standing left, congratulates the semifinalists: (seated, l-r) Gavin Van Skiver of Warren Township, Daniel Lee of Watchung, Jenny Yan of Warren Township, and Michelle Shui of Green Brook Township; (standing, l-r) Caroline Rucker and Jonathan Rich of Warren Township, Joyce Zhou of Green Brook Township, and Natalie Kim, Nicole Wang and Karthik Irakam, all of Warren Township.

C. Ronan, Sarah M. Rosa, Sydney Roth, Rachel P. Sabnani, Joshua N. Schmidt, Kinnary H. Shah, Jeremiah I. Sullivan, Raymond S. Tang, Ethan Tu, Cidney L. Weng, Alexander B. Wu, Emily Yan, Brian H. Zeng, and Andrew H. Zheng.

The six Class of 2016 WHRHS National Merit Semifinalists are: Claire Yuxuan Chen, Kunwoo Park, Emily Kim, Isis Zhang, Eric Zhu and Henry Zhu.

The 11 Class of 2015 WHRHS National Semifinalists are: Gregory Carroll, Karen Chi, Joseph Da, Helen Dai, Chen Ding, Alex Duncan, Andre Gou, Kevin Guo, Stuart Ki, Sharon Liu, and Katie Mathison.

According to NMSC, about 90 percent of this year's Semifinalists are expected to be eventually named Finalists. The competition continues for this year's Semifinalists, with students required to submit a detailed application including academic record, records of school and community activity participation, employment records, lists of other honors and awards won, and indications of leadership skills. They must also take the SAT.

Finalists are vying for about 2,500 National Merit Scholarships, as well as about 1,000 scholarships awarded by businesses and corporations and some 4,000 scholarships from colleges and universities to students attending their colleges and universities.



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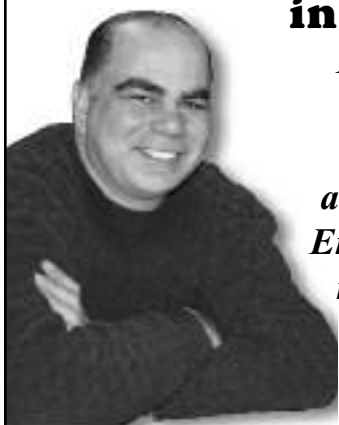
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SCOUTS THANK TWO LOCALS FOR SUPPORT

Cub Scout Pack 32 is extending an overdue thanks to Carlos Fuentes for his generous donation of camping gear to the pack. Mr. Fuentes is a former Cub Master and gave the pack a large amount of gear that has since been used at multiple Cub Scout Camporees over the last few years. The tents he shared have allowed over 1 dozen families to have their first camping experience. The large camp stove is used regularly to prepare breakfast, lunches, and dinners for the dozens of scouts and their families that attend pack outings. Mr. Fuentes also contributed sleeping bags, a lantern, hiking back packs, and waterproof bags. He truly exhibits the scouting values of being helpful and courteous while allowing the pack to be thrifty.

The pack also would like to thank Greg Cort of G&M Windows and Gutters, for agreeing to host all of the pack's camping and operating equipment in his sizable and immaculate garage. In addition to the equipment from Mr. Fuentes, the pack has amassed quite an inventory of camping supplies and other materials, including a 40-foot metal Pinewood Derby track. When the current storage space became unavailable, Mr.

Cort stepped right in to offer his space. Mr. Cort has said, "I am happy to help out the Cub Scouts in any way they need. This is my good turn for all that they have done for the kids in this town."

By thinking of others, both Mr. Fuentes and Mr. Cort have set good examples for our youth and have made the Cub Scouting experience much better for everyone involved.



(above) This well-kept garage is now home to all of the pack's camping equipment and can still fit two cars!



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PARENTS HAVE A 'DAY IN THE LIFE' EXPERIENCE AT WHRHS

Parents of the more than 2,000 Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) students experienced a micro-version of a day in the life of their son's or daughter's school day during the 2016 Back to School Night, Thursday, Oct. 6, at the school. For the convenience of parents who could not attend Thursday night's Back to School Night, from 7 to 9 p.m., an identical Back to School Day was offered on Monday morning, Oct. 10 from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Following their child's typical school day, parents scurried through the school's sprawling educational plant, to meet the teachers and hear short presentations about a course's syllabus and expectations for the semester.

The school's Art Department posted student artwork throughout the school's entrance atrium. School sports teams and extracurricular activities presented information on bulletin boards. And school administrators, and teachers and student volunteers roamed hallways to answer questions about how to best get from one part of the school to another. The South Cafeteria included student and parent booster club representatives from a variety of sports and activities. They displayed information about their team or activity, and some sold school spirit apparel as fundraisers.

The student government's All Student Council, opened the school's "Spirit Store," where on Friday lunch periods and Friday afternoons, students can purchase apparel bearing the WHRHS logo, colors and nickname, "Warriors." Parents could purchase these items at Back To School Night, and could pick up a flier listing the school store's web address, www.shop.mvpteamgear.com/Watchung-Hills-School-Store_c184.htm, where they can purchase school apparel on-line anytime.

Among the fundraising items available by the Softball team was a WHRHS umbrella, suitable for watching any sport that persists and plays despite a little rain in the sky. The Softball team also offered hats, and a variety of shirts, and sweatshirts.

In addition to the Spirit Store and Softball Team, there were displays and students representing the Yearbook, the Chorus, the Script and Cue Dramatic Club, the Marching Band, and Lacrosse. The student who played Lacrosse also played Field Hockey, and could answer questions about both teams. The Chorus singers offered WHRHS dress ties. Script and Cue offered mini-cupcakes. The Marching Band offered cowbells



(above) Senior Allison Horvath of Warren Township, and Sophomore Elizabeth Chapleski of Green Brook Township represented the WHRHS Tri-M Music Honor Society and the WHRHS Chorus at the WHRHS Back To School Night, Thursday, Oct. 6. The annual Winter Choral Concert, which is open to the public, is at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 16.

and multi-purpose rally towels.

Out in the entrance atrium, the Watchung Hills Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) had information about the PTO monthly meeting dates, a membership form, and a welcome letter from the PTO officers. This year's PTO officers are: President Danielle Heise, Vice Presidents Aparna Virmani and Barbara Boschen, Corresponding Secretary Jennie Renzo, Treasurers Emily Peng and Marjorie Lee, and Teacher Liaison Sean DiGiovanna.



(above) Student staffers presented information the Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) Yearbook at Back to School Night, Thursday, Oct. 6. They are, standing left, Sophomore Isha Kasu of Warren Township, standing right Senior McKenzie Schuyler of Green Brook Township, and seated, Senior Emily Yan of Warren. Schuyler and Yan are editors. They said the Yearbook is a year-long project that includes interim deadlines each quarter on the way to the final product at the end of the school year.

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MAGIC OF KINDNESS



(left) Principal of Bayberry School, Michael Vignola, center, with fourth graders Nicole Dahl (left) and Emma Hayes (right) display their magic wands as part of the kick off to the fourth grade kindness project. The fourth grade is busy making magic wands to bring "The Magic of Kindness" to all the students and staff of Bayberry School. This was one of the schoolwide activities for the National Week of Respect, October 3rd - 7th.

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To celebrate Fire Prevention Week, The Watchung Fire Department conducted their annual Fire Prevention Assembly for both Bayberry and Valley View schools on Friday, October 14th. The students were shown a video,

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HARVEST FESTIVAL PHOTO ALBUM IS ONLINE

The Watchung Harvest Festival was held on October 29th at Mobus Park. Photos from this and other events can be found online at rennamedia.com and on the Watchung Post page on facebook.com Feel free to "Like", "Tag" and "Share"



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WHRHS EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM

Reporting out from last summer's Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) Extended School Year (E.S.Y.) program, WHRHS Special Services teacher Amita Lluveres says the response from 20 to 25 students to the proverbial start-of-school-year question, "What did you do over the summer?" is: An enviable list of memorable living/learning experiences, both inside and outside the classroom.

"Every day, our students were greeted by our wonderful summer staff," Lluveres said. "Each day of the week had something special to offer. Our students looked forward to our daily lessons in a variety of subject areas such as Language Arts, Mathematics, Meal Planning, and Career Exploration. Students were given the chance to work collaboratively with a variety of peers throughout the summer days in the E.S.Y. program."

On Mondays, students had the opportunity to learn and practice skills in the classroom.

"They continued to develop their computational skills, including in personal budgeting, and were given the task to read and discuss the selected summer reading book. The book was, 'The BFG,' by Roald Dahl," she said. "We wanted to show our students the connection between print and electronic media simultaneous with the release in July of the feature film, 'The BFG,' directed by the legendary Steven Spielberg."

Tuesdays were devoted to going to the local ShopRite Supermarket in Stirling, where the students learned about and developed skills in going to the market. They experienced what it is like to purchase the necessary ingredients and food items to then cook meals on Thursdays in the program's kitchen.

"Meal planning is a major life lesson that we

want our students to be prepared to do as they continue to grow into adulthood," Lluveres said. "By engaging in this activity every week, students gained the knowledge and skills to help them make smart choices when food shopping. Students not only located items on their list, but also compared prices and made decisions on which items were best to fit into a weekly budget."

On Wednesdays, the program focused on educational trips to local businesses such as the Prestige Diner in New Providence and Norz Hill Farm and Market in Hillsborough Township.

"Other trips included Menlo Park Mall in Edison Township, as well as to Red Mill Historical Museum in Clinton, and the Somerset Patriots Stadium in Bridgewater Township," she said. "We wanted to give our students a summer full of great memories and a wide-variety of learning experiences."

"All the while," Lluveres said, "we were also working on communication skills, on skills necessary to build confidence in being independent, to better understand the value and the worth of things, and just to have an enjoyable summer."

On Fridays, the program went on recreational trips throughout the local community.

"We visited sites of interest such as Bowlmor in Green Brook Township and Bowcraft Amusement Park in Scotch Plains," said Lluveres. "We also had the opportunity to visit the Turtle Back Zoo in West Orange, an all-time favorite trip we all look forward to in the summer."

The E.S.Y Program was meant to help bridge the gap between the end of one school year in June and the start of the next school year in September, Lluveres said. The half-day program



(above) Special Services teacher
Amita Lluveres

was offered five days a week, for six weeks, from July 1 to Aug. 12.

"Through the whole process," she said, "we had the support and assistance of the students' parents, the great cooperation of the staffs of the businesses and sites of interest that welcomed the students during their field trips, and the professionalism and education skills of her staff and volunteers. Among them are WHRHS Director of Special Services Marianne Sales, Jon Bedi, Stephen Eng, Andrew Tronzano, Jack Beckert, Erin Ferrara, Jane Giannelli, James Granuzzo, Patrick O'Halloran, Nurse Angela Valerio, and Student Volunteer Katie Holz. We also want to thank our substitute staff members: Carl Bird and James Hurley."

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