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# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEWS

For Immediate Release  
November 22, 2023

## ***Middle School FutureActs Students Show Out to Support Annual Gobble Up Hunger Thanksgiving Drive***

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP – More than 100 students turned out on Wednesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> in support of the District Middle School FutureActs program's annual Gobble Up Hunger Drive. Students from all three middle schools volunteered their time at Bunker Hill Middle School, unpacking and sorting food to set up an assembly line of food items including stuffing, gravy, corn, green beans and soup – as well as fresh produce like russet and sweet potatoes, carrots, apples, and pie - that were placed into Thanksgiving baskets for families in need. Each family also received a turkey. Other donated food items included in the food baskets were breakfast items, pasta and pasta sauce, and peanut butter and jelly. Students then packed the food baskets and loaded boxes into waiting vehicles for delivery.

This annual event is organized by the middle school FutureActs advisors at each middle school: Heather Finn (Bunker Hill), Maddy Kubik and Amy Leso (Orchard Valley), and Amanda Dacquisto and Kim Hinrichs (Chestnut Ridge).

FutureAct advisors gave a special thanks to Tony Grelli and Velocity Ventures for their immense support, as well as tremendous assistance from Jimmy DePiano and AJ Flooring, Kitchen & Bath. Other sponsors and supporters of the drive included: the Washington Township Education Association, Washington Township Rotary, Michael Liberi and Liberi Fence, DelVal Pools & Spas, Mother's Cupboard, ShopRite of Washington Township – Bottino's Family Market, Lenny DeFiore and Dayna's Party Rentals, the Washington Township Police Department, Washington Township Youth Football, the Washington Township Schools Operations Department, Johni and Mike Sawyer, Maureen Pasternak, Tiffany Orihel, and multiple community members.

The FutureAct clubs will now turn their attention to the annual Power of Giving event. Community members interested in donating to the project, or sponsoring a student or family for the upcoming gift-giving holidays, are invited to email Maddy Kubik at [mkubik@wtps.org](mailto:mkubik@wtps.org).

### **Photos attached:**

**1gobble23.jpg** – Middle School FutureActs students get ready to start preparing boxes for the annual Gobble Up Hunger Drive Wednesday at Bunker Hill Middle School.

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**2gobble23.jpg** – BHMS sixth-graders Skylar Greco (left) and Rylee Desimone add cranberry sauce into a donation box.

**3gobble23.jpg** – Orchard Valley Middle School eighth-graders Cody Halicks (left) and Nassir Halty pack up a box.

**4gobble23.jpg** – Chestnut Ridge Middle School sixth-graders (left to right) Carlotta Costello, Harper Macchione, and Alayna Chindemi are all smiles while working at the Gobble Up Hunger Drive.

**8gobble23.jpg** – Who needs to see when carrying boxes of donated food items?

**14gobble23.jpg** – Tony Grelli and his team from Velocity Ventures were on hand to assist the students on Wednesday.

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# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEWS

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November 22, 2023

## ***Washington Township High School to Host Kick-Off Event for Visual & Performing Arts Academy on November 29th***

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP – The Washington Township Visual & Performing Arts Department is excited to announce the launch of the TWP VPA Academy for the 2024-25 school year. Students who apply will focus their high school arts experience through one of four pathways in either Visual Art, Music, Dance, or Theatre. Traditional VPA courses are being reimaged and combined with new, targeted course offerings to better prepare students for further study at college or in the workforce while enhancing their overall high school experience.

The inaugural year of the VPA Academy will be open to students currently in eighth and ninth grade. A Kick-Off Event will be held on Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 7 p.m. in the Republic Bank Performing Arts Center at WTHS. Join students, staff and administration for an evening of performances, artwork and information about the VPA Academy, including how to apply.

"We hope to see all interested students and their families on the 29th to begin their TWP VPA Academy journey where We Are TWPArts!" District Supervisor of Visual & Performing Arts Casey Corigliano said.

A flyer promoted the Kick-Off Event is attached.

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# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEWS

For Immediate Release  
November 27, 2023

## ***District Places 18 Students on All-South Jersey Junior and Senior High Chorus Ensembles***

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP – Eighteen Washington Township students have been named to the All-South Jersey Choruses following successful auditions. The District representatives were among nearly 650 area students who competed for the prestigious ensembles on November 18th.

### **The Washington Township honorees include:**

**All-South Jersey Junior High Chorus** (grades 7-9) – *Bunker Hill Middle School*: Luci DiVenti, Ella Pestritto, Courtney Waddington; *Chestnut Ridge Middle School*: Jack Ehrenworth, Sophia Scappa; *Orchard Valley Middle School*: Jake Alexander, Joy Umeh, Bella Porreca; *Washington Township High School*: Cate Crawford, Mia D'Ostillo, Kris Jenkinson.

**All-South Jersey Senior High Chorus** (grades 10-12): *Washington Township High School*: John Ecker, Daniel Hillig, Riley Holmes, Gianna Melhorn, Eddie Mulvihill, Presley Terch, Emily Westenberger.

Special recognition was given to Luci DiVenti as the Junior High Alto 1 Section Leader, and Daniel Hillig as the Senior High Tenor 1 Section Leader.

These singers will begin rehearsing starting next month in preparation for concerts in January 2024, to be hosted and held at Washington Township High School's Republic Bank Performing Arts Center on Saturday, January 27th, at 8 p.m., and Sunday, January 28th, at 4 p.m.

"We, the choir directors, congratulate our students who were accepted to these ensembles and commend them for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to choral excellence," District choir directors Nancy Dickinson (BHMS), Christina Davison (CRMS), Alyssa Campanini (OVMS) and Amy Melson (WTHS) said in a combined statement. "These students showcase the talent and dedication that proudly represent the TWP Performing Arts department!"

Individual head shots of the selected students are attached.

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# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEWS

For Immediate Release  
November 27, 2023

## ***Orchard Valley Middle School Sixth-Graders Win School's Grade-Level "Plump the Turkey" Competition***

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP – Orchard Valley Middle School recently held its annual "Plump the Turkey" competition, and the sixth-graders came out victorious. They voted to have Mrs. Adrienne Choma wear the iconic turkey costume on the day before Thanksgiving break (Wednesday, November 22, 2023).

Throughout the previous week, students purchased feathers to decorate their grade-level turkey. The money raised helped provide a Thanksgiving feast for families in need.

In the attached photo, OVMS sixth-graders pose with Mrs. Choma (center) in the turkey costume. They include (left to right): Liam Hardy, David Neild, Reagan McKinney, Mrs. Choma, Avery Ferraiolo, Liam Miner, and Jude Hayden.

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# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEWS

For Immediate Release  
November 27, 2023

## ***Orchard Valley Middle School Students Play "Minutemen Musical Chairs" as Part of Social Studies Lesson***

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP – Orchard Valley Middle School eighth-grade social studies students in Mrs. Sharon May's classes combined an American Revolution test review with some fun on Wednesday, November 22, 2023.

The class played a game of "Minutemen Musical Chairs," with a group of six students starting in chairs in the front of the school cafeteria. The rest of the class was the audience, and they were given white boards to use at the cafeteria tables. Using true/false or multiple-choice review questions that were submitted by students in her classes, Mrs. May would read the question aloud. The audience had to answer on the white boards and hold them in the air. The competitors then were released, and they had to pick a correct answer from an audience member, grab that white board, and race back into a chair. Each question, a chair was removed until one student was the winner.

The classes played several rounds, with different competitors in each round. Winners and runner-ups were able to pick a prize from the stage, as provided by Mrs. May.

### **Photos attached:**

**1ovmschairs.jpg** – OVMS eighth-graders (left to right) Logan Kohut, Harry Watts, Cody Halicks, Grayson Hull, and Ravi Patel race for correct answers during Minutemen Musical Chairs.

**2ovmschairs.jpg** – Eighth-grader Logan Kohut heads back to the chairs after grabbing a white board.

**4ovmschairs.jpg** – Harry Watts (second from right) outraces classmate Ravi Patel for the last chair during a round of Minutemen Musical Chairs.

**5ovmschairs.jpg** – Mrs. May reads one of the review questions on Wednesday morning.

**6ovmschairs.jpg** – Students Ravi Patel (left) and Cody Halicks reach for correct answers from audience members.

**8ovmschairs.jpg** – Cody Halicks collects his prize for winning a round of Minutemen Musical Chairs.

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# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEWS

For Immediate Release  
November 29, 2023

## ***Bunker Hill Middle School Students Visit the "ELA Café" for a Tasting Menu of Books***

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP – Bunker Hill Middle School students in Mrs. Shannon Enders' English Language Arts classes had a chance to visit the "ELA Café" on Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> for a "book tasting" with their teacher.

Playing the role of hostess, server, and more, Mrs. Enders sat the students at tables in the instructional media center, which was set up like a restaurant, before going over the day's "menu." On the menu were nine different genres of books – Biography, Autobiography, Memoir, Graphic Novel, Fantasy, Dystopian, Mystery, Science Fiction, Historical Fiction.

The students spent 8 to 10 minutes at each table sampling the offerings – several books from each genre were there to peruse – before rotating to a table with additional options. The students had to note which genres they enjoyed – some of which they hadn't been exposed to previously.

Adding to the event, Mrs. Enders prepared snack-size appetizers of animal crackers and Goldfish crackers for the students to enjoy while they sampled the books.

### **Photos attached:**

**1elacafe23.jpg** – Mrs. Shannon Enders explains the rules of the "ELA Café" on Tuesday in the Bunker Hill Middle School instructional media center.

**3elacafe23.jpg** – Mrs. Enders discusses genres with seventh-grader (clockwise, from far left) Chase Cournoyer, Gianna Pastore, Madison Stoelker, and Joshua LaFountain.

**4elacafe23.jpg** – BHMS seventh-grader Jasmine Zubairu checks out a book while classmates Abigail Raroha (left) and Arihanna Roman look on.

**5elacafe23.jpg** – Seventh-graders Jake Jackson (left) and Mason Furman check out some of offerings at the ELA Café.

**6elacafe23.jpg** – Mrs. Enders discusses graphic novels with seventh-graders (clockwise, from far left) Harper Kull, Mia Tamburro, Marcella Patrizio, and Milanna Pagliaccetti.

**7elacafe23.jpg** – Animal cracker appetizers were available for the students at the ELA Café.



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# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEWS

For Immediate Release  
November 30, 2023

## ***District's Third-Graders Gifted Dictionaries Thanks to Washington Township Rotary Donation***

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP – Third-grade students at Birches Elementary School had a special visitor on Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, as Superintendent of Schools Dr. Eric Hibbs, alongside representatives from Washington Township Rotary, entered their classrooms with some pre-holidays gifts.

The Birches students – as well as every third-grade student enrolled in Washington Township's six elementary schools – are recipients of brand-new dictionaries, as provided thanks to the generosity of WT Rotary. The organization's efforts have been funding dictionary donations in the schools for the past 18 years.

The Rotary Club of Washington Township is an organization of business and professional persons, like Rotary International, who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations and help build goodwill and peace in the world. Washington Township Rotary purchases the dictionaries from the non-profit group, The Dictionary Project ([www.dictionaryproject.org](http://www.dictionaryproject.org)). The goal of the program is to assist all students to become good writers, active readers and creative thinkers by providing students a gift of their own personal dictionary.

Dr. Hibbs helped make the presentations at Birches, stressing the things the students can learn with the use of the dictionary that go beyond even the definition and spelling of words. The dictionary includes historical information, multiplication tables, a list of presidents with biographical information, and much more.

"Keep this somewhere so you can use it when you're doing work at home or at school," Dr. Hibbs said. "I still have my childhood dictionary and my college dictionary, and even one that Rotary gave me last year. This is something you can use for the rest of your life."

### **Photos attached:**

**1birdict23.jpg** – Washington Township Superintendent of Schools Dr. Eric Hibbs shows Birches Elementary School third-graders what they can do with their new dictionaries.

**2birdict23.jpg** – Dr. Hibbs and third-grader Natalie Wick look at the longest word in the English language, which was found in her new dictionary.

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**4birdict23.jpg** – Third-grade teacher Nichole Cuorato helps student Anthony Walls find a word in his new dictionary. At left is third-grader Maddie Lanting and at right is classmate Lucas Wisniewski.

**6birdict23.jpg** – Birches principal Julie LaRubbio checks out a dictionary with third-grader Jada Streater.

**8birdict23.jpg** – Dr. Hibbs shows third-grader Sofia Litton some of the information in her new dictionary.

**10birdict23.jpg** – Elementary supervisor Janine Ryan looks through dictionary with third-grader Kayleigh Syzchulski.

**13birdict23.jpg** – District administrators join representatives from Washington Township Rotary at Birches Elementary School's dictionary distribution on Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. Pictured include (left to right): Rotarian Vince Esposito, Rotarian Erma Totoro, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Eric Hibbs, Rotarian Sue Esposito, Birches principal Julie LaRubbio, and District elementary supervisor Janine Ryan.

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