



# Wood Road Times

Wood Road's Student Newspaper

March 2017

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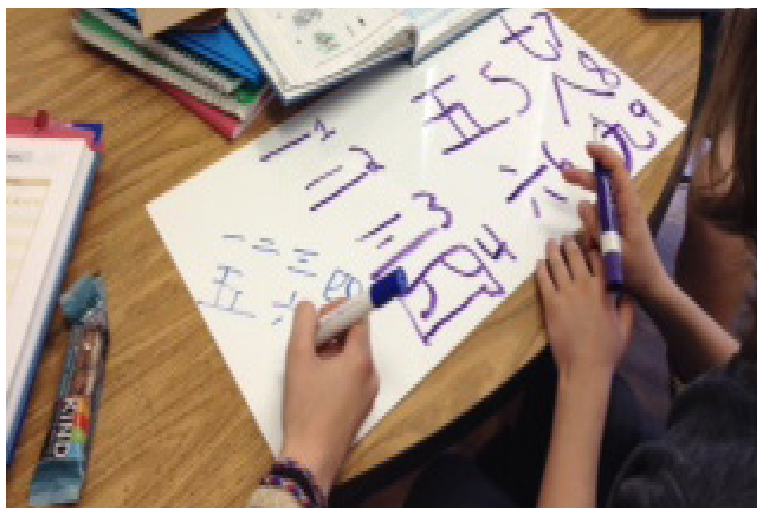
### Students Learn about Chinese Language and Culture

By Alisabeth Dreher

Each year, Wood Road students in grades one through five are given the opportunity to learn about the Chinese language and culture through an after school enrichment program. The program, taught by Mrs. McCarthy, the district's scholars teacher, is an after-school BOCES program.

"I believe it's a great benefit to learn about other cultures and languages. It promotes understanding and better communication among people around the world," said McCarthy, adding that China is a large global power and feels it is important for Americans to learn how to communicate with them.

"Chinese has



Students learn how to write Chinese symbols in after-school Chinese enrichment program.

been identified as a critical language, meaning we need more speakers of Chinese," she said.

Classes are composed of language lessons and hands-on culture activities. The students recently learned how to use chopsticks and how to play ping-pong, which is known as China's national sport.

Fifth grader, Andrew Brooks, is in his second year learning the

Chinese language.

"It is fun to learn another language, and it's really exciting if you can say words in different languages," he said.

Hannah Chen, a fifth grade student who moved to Wood Road from Taiwan this year, helps out with the students who are struggling.



## Wood Road Scientists

In March, students from Wood Road took part in a district-wide science and engineering fair. The fair was open to students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Each participating student who presented their project earned a Scientific Investigator's License.



**Kindergartener, Jalen, dressed as a 100-year-old man in celebration of the 100th day of school.**

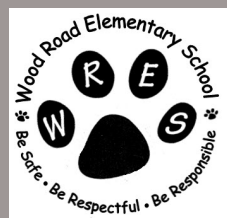
## Wood Road Times

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**Fifth graders participated in Wood Road's annual Survivor Tournament in March.**



# Student Spotlight

## Caroline Sturm

By Emily Bagan

Caroline Sturm is a fifth grader in Mrs. Nickson's class. I had the opportunity to sit down with her and talk with her about what she likes to do in her free time, acting, and about 5th grade. Here's what she had to say:

"It feels weird to be the Student of the Month because at first I didn't even know what it was," Caroline said.

In her free time, Caroline likes to play video games and act. She has been acting for about three years. Caroline has been in "Wonderland," "Flashback," "Flapper," "Beauty and the Beast," and played the part of Snow White in "A Fairytale Christmas Carol."

"I act because it is very fun," she said. "You have to have a very good memory because you have to remember a lot of lines, lyrics and choreography."

Caroline said that in second grade, her friend Fiona Hughes inspired her to start acting. Fiona is a fifth grader at Wood Road.

"I was watching one of the plays that she was in, and then I wanted to do them too," Caroline said.

When I asked Caroline how she auditions for the roles, it was not how I imagined it.

"You don't really audition for the roles," she said. "You audition and whatever role you get depends on how good you are."

Caroline said her favorite play was "Flashback."

"It was my second play and it went back to other plays that I wasn't in, like 'Pocahontas.' In 'Flashback,' I was able to be in those other plays," she said.

Caroline's next play is "Peter Pan," and she is very excited about



**Fifth-grader, Caroline Sturm, has been in numerous plays including, "Wonderland" and "Beauty And The Beast."**

it. She said that being a fifth-grader is fun but hard at the same time.

"It is harder because there is more homework, but we also get more opportunities to do things," she said.

Her favorite things about fifth grade are the teachers and the projects.

"My favorite

subject is math, and I also enjoy writing short stories for fun," she said.

Caroline wants to be an engineer when she grows up.

"I love designing and building things," she said.

*Teachers! Nominate one of your students for our next Student Spotlight!*

# Ready, set, write!

## Students Participate In Great Mail Race

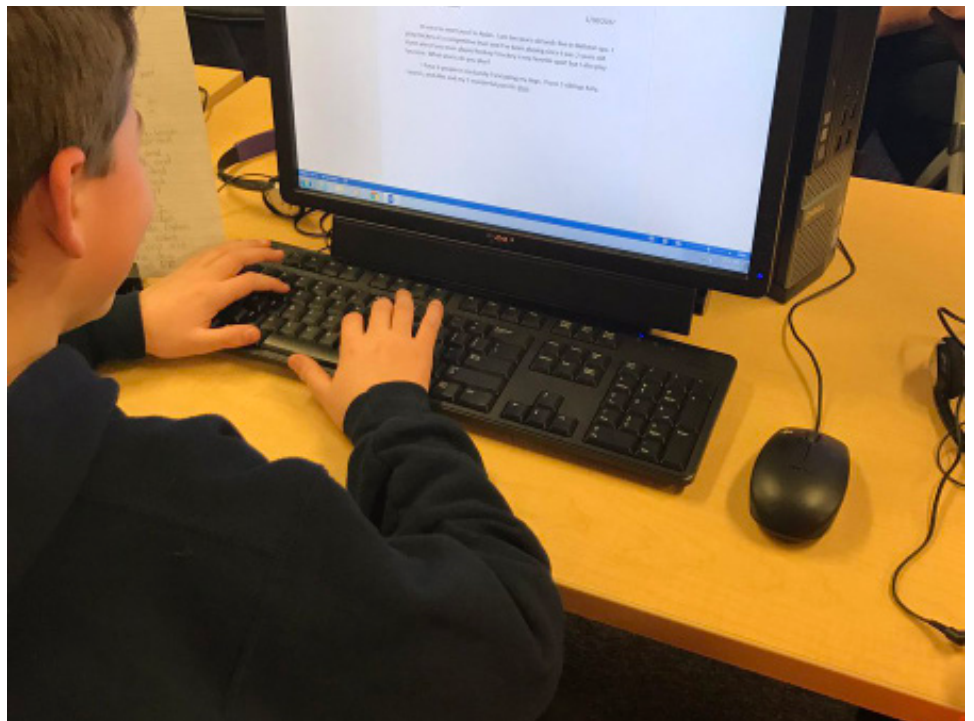
By Natalia Guthrie

Fifth-graders are eagerly awaiting a letter in the mail. Not email, but 'a real paper letter inside an envelope with a stamp' kind of letter. The letter is the final part to a project, which had students writing letters to other fifth-grade students around the country.

The Great Mail Race is a race to send letters across the country in hopes of getting a return letter and learn about what school and life is like in that state. The project incorporates geography, social studies, language arts and "real" letter writing.

"The exciting thing about this is getting mail and learning about other states," said Mrs. Tetu, fifth-grade teacher. "Our goal is to hear from all 50 states."

Each student picked a state randomly. Once they knew what state they would be sending a letter to, they went to a website to find a school in that state. The school had to have a fifth-grade class. In their letter they wrote about life in Ballston Spa, about



**Fifth-grade students finish the final drafts of letters that were sent to elementary schools across the country.**

Wood Road and about what they do in their free time. A local landmark that appeared in a number of the student's letters was the Doubleday House. Students also wrote about the Brookside Museum as well as the close proximity of the Saratoga Battlefield. When the letter was complete, the students typed them up on a computer. Next, and eye-opening to many students

was addressing an envelope. With technology and email, most students have never actually sat down and sent snail mail before this project.

"The most exciting thing about the Great Mail Race is sending a letter to another state and trying to get a letter back from them," said Conner Garrant, a fifth grade student in Mrs. Tetu's class.



# Students In Check

## Chess Club Hosts Regional Tournament

By Maddox Minarik

It was a meeting of the minds in the Wood Road cafeteria in February when the Wood Road Chess Club hosted its second annual Scholastic Chess Tournament in the Wood Road Cafeteria. More than 120 students and adults competed in the four-round tournament with more than 25 schools from around New York State.

Mr. Ferrone, Chess Club Advisor, said the tournament was a success and the kids enjoyed the chance to compete.

The Wood Road Chess Club is an after-school activity which started in 2014. The club meets for eight weeks in the fall. This year, the club was open to second, third, fourth and fifth grades. Ferrone said the interest in chess grows every year at Wood Road.

"I opened it up to fifth grade this year because the fourth graders last year wanted to stay," Ferrone said. "I would like to be able to offer Chess Club to all students one day. It is a fun activity and helps them (the students) in critical thinking as well as sportsmanship."

This year's tournament was open to the whole community within 50 miles and any student in New York that has an interest in chess.



**Students from Wood Road and neighboring schools participate in second annual chess tournament held at Wood Road in February.**

The Wood Road Chess Club placed fourth overall in the tournament led by second grader Anabel Disher, third graders CJ Adams and Timothy Sikoryak, fourth grader Ben Taylor, and fifth graders Brayden Dambaugh and Aidan Maloney. Additional Wood Road participants included Ella

Weller-Zembo, Brody Bashford, Sarah Himmelwright, Mackenzie Allen, Peter Hinckley, Zachary Dambaugh, Erin Fillion, Natasha Obliskey, Destiny Prichard, Amelia DeLuke, Jason Gamache, Matthew Adams, Jake Taylor, Olivia Smith, and Tyler Perkins.

# THE SCOOP

**K** Kindergarten has been very busy planning for upcoming activities and field trips. Mrs. Clancy's class and Mrs.

Smiley's class have been learning with live ladybugs for their most recent science unit and just finished a "Push and Pull Unit."

Mrs. Clancy's class used what they've learned to create "the best leprechaun catching machine." Students also celebrated being in kindergarten for 100 days with a variety of activities. In math, students are subtracting numbers, and in ELA they are reading and writing non-fiction books about oceans and insects.

- Natalia Guthrie

**1**

In first grade, Ms. Forgea, Mrs. Brunson and Mrs. Osinski's classes are learning all about penguins and Antarctica. Students were excited to create clay penguins in art, dig deeper into research in library, and watch

penguins live in computer lab on a video cam from the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California. Mr. Gronau's class is working on an animal research project. The students choose the animal they will research. All of first grade celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday with special activities such as goldfish graphing in the theme of "Red Fish, Blue Fish" and snacking on special snacks such as "Pop on Pop Corn." New this year in science is the Light and Sound unit, which students will begin soon. Classes will also soon be receiving organism kits, which include bugs such as pill bugs, giant beetles and little fish.

- Isabelle Sikoryak

**2**

Wood Road's second graders have been busy little scientists. They are just

finishing up a unit about erosion and are starting a new topic soon.

We are doing a mini-research project on polar bears, like polar bear tracking," said Mrs. Cousineau. "My class has done some coding, and they really like it, and they're learning how to use Google Earth for a science unit. In our freetime, we get to use Prodigy Math."

"We have an exciting project coming in spring, but it's a surprise, we don't want to give it away yet. We're also going to start our Chinese Enrichment Program," Mrs. Cousineau said.

- Ashley Hu





## 3

Third-graders have been working on an around-the-world research project. Each student explored the history, economy, government, culture and geography of a chosen country. After the research was complete, the students began taking the information they gathered to make a project to share with their classmates. Projects include Powerpoint presentations, online digital posters and their own Kahoots. In ELA, students are working on pulling out main ideas and supporting details. Mrs. Damico's class is doing a Japan module using "The Magic Treehouse" books to help them understand the five strands - Government/Politics, Economics, History, Geography, Social/Culture. In science, Mrs. Van Volkenburg class is working on a new science kit called, "The Vex-Kit." The kit is like Legos, and helps students build their own simple machines. Math has students doing a lot of multiplication and division. To help the students memorize their multiplication facts, they sing songs. For example; with their seven facts they sing the song "Happy Birthday." This year in 3rd grade, the teachers are nominating students that follow the "3 B's" with Student Of The Month.

- Alisabeth Dreher



## 4

Rather than moving through four different teachers this year, students spend their day with two teachers - one for ELA and social studies and the other for math and science. Teachers said they felt it was better for the students to have two teachers and less transition time. Mrs. Mongeon's and Mrs. French's classes recently finished personal narratives along with mini projects about Colonial Times. They are now onto the American Revolution and electrical circuits. Mrs. DeLeonardis and Mrs. Monastero's classes are working on book reports, learning about electricity, and finishing up a project on Colonial America as well as practicing short responses. In math, the students are learning about fractions. Science has recently been all about float and sink.

- Maddox Minarik

## 5

Students are learning about the Solar System. They will research a planet with a group and then create a travel commercial for the planet they are studying using Green Screen Technology. Green Screen Technology is when students are filmed in front of a green screen, and then teachers have the ability to change the background to put them in different settings. For this project, Mrs. Manke will put the students on the planet that they are studying. Other students are learning about the Earth's systems and how they interact and will create projects representing the interactions. In math, students are using a hands-on approach to figuring out formulas for different geometric measurements. Students are also learning about geometry while exploring 3-D shapes and 2-D shapes. As part of ELA, fifth graders recently participated in the Great Mail Race. Students selected schools across the country and wrote a letter to a fifth grade class in that school, hoping to receive a letter in return. Read more about the Great Mail Race on page 4.

- Emily Bagan



# Spotlight on Staff

## Ms. Ernst

By Isabelle Sikoryak

Ms. Ernst has had a passion math for as long as she can remember.

“I owned a lot of problem solving games as a kid,” Ms. Ernst said. “But really, my seventh- and eighth- grade math teachers are what made me like math so much.”

This is Ms. Ernst’s first year teaching math full-time at Wood Road. Before that, she was a third-grade classroom teacher.

“I really enjoy being a part of a child’s excitement for learning math,” she said.

Ernst doesn’t just teach math. She is also a robotics coach and Odyssey of the Mind advisor, which she said closely relates to math with problem solving skills.

“Students use creativity, problem solving and team building skills. They also include technology and cooperation,” she said.

Ernst said the students are what motivates her to go to work everyday.

“I like solving the riddle of helping students with math,” she said.

Fifth-grader, Ivy Wilcox, said Ms. Ernst makes geometry fun. Another fifth grader, Han-



**Ms. Ernst, pictured here with fourth grader, Evan Zalucky, said it was her middle school teachers who ignited her passion for math.**

nah Cline, said she likes Ms. Ernst’s humor and that she always makes class funny.

Before coming to Wood Road, Ernst taught people who wanted to become teachers at SUNY Oneonta. Ms. Ernst has taught AIS math, sixth grade,

college classes, second grade and third grade.

*Students and Parents! Nominate a staff member for our next Student Spotlight by contacting us at Wood Road Times!*



# A Talented Group

## Wood Road Students Perform at Talent Show

By Ashley Hu

Fifty Wood Road students showed off their best talents in January, at the annual Wood Road Talent show.

Fifth grader, Amanda Duffy sang “Middle of Starting Over” with her friend, Alley Eisler.

This is not Amanda’s first time performing. In kindergarten, she sang “Three Little Birds,” in second grade, she sang “22”, and in fourth grade, she sang “Fight Song.” Although, she sang these previous songs alone. This year is her first year singing with someone by her side. Amanda said, she “just loves singing.” She often sings to herself at home to practice.

The talent show is an annual event brought to Wood Road by PTA. This year’s show showcased 24 acts.

“We do this each year so the kids at Wood Road get to show off their talents,” said Mrs. Smith from The Beehive, who serves as the MC for the show. The contestants began practicing twice a week after school in December.



**Amy Taylor, Kate Taylor, Camryn Wodzinski and Lila Zalucky put on a dance performance in the Wood Road Talent Show.**

“The practice did help because I didn’t really know the song, and Alley did, so she helped me learn the lyrics.” Amanda said.

Several years ago, the PTA came up with the idea of doing the talent show. The plan was to give kids opportunities to show off their talents, and it’s

been a hit ever since.

In the past, there have been acts such as magicians, gymnasts, piano players, dancers and comedians.

Mrs. Smith said it is hard to say which act was the most exciting throughout the years, because they all stand out.

# Character Counts

Ask any Wood Road student what the 3 B's are, and they may mention Scottie Bucks or Scottie Day or school-wide assemblies. Years ago, Wood Road adopted the PBIS philosophy. What exactly is a PBIS philosophy? Well, PBIS stands for Positive Behavior Interventions and Support. But, what does that mean? Here at Wood Road we feel that a proactive approach to establishing good behavior and social culture is important to achieving social, emotional and academic success. PBIS incorporates Scottie Bucks on a regular basis as well as Scottie Days throughout the year as rewards for following what we call the three B's - Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible. As a component to PBIS, our school integrates Character education. Each month, students learn about a different character trait encouraging students to display that positive behavior. Our reporters asked a handful of students what the most recent character traits mean to them. Here is what they had to say.

"Caring means to give to other people and take care of things that are not yours." - McKenna, 4th

"Friendship means being nice to someone and not being mean." - Karsyn, 3rd

"Friendship is when two friends become best friends." - Avery, 2nd

"Kindness is to be nice to one another." - Ella, 2nd

"Respect is to be good and behave for your teacher." - Leah, 2nd

"Respect means if someone loans you a toy, you take care of it." - Timothy, 3rd

"Friendship means being nice to your friends and to give them cups of water or anything they need when you're the host." Ryan, 5th

**FRIENDSHIP  
RESPECT  
CARING  
PERSISTENCE**

"Friendship is being nice to people even if they are mean to you, and it's being kind to people that might feel left out or new to the school." - Andrew, 5th

"Be loyal and be nice to your friends, while you have them." - Camryn, 5th

"Friendship means that I'm always there for them and I'll never betray them, especially best friends. You show friendship by respecting them and caring for them." - Libby, 5th

"If somebody fell down, help them up." - Alana, 5th

"I show friendship by if somebody is not being kind or somebody is being left out, I'll help them and be nice to them." Fiona, 5th

"Friendship means that you have a very good relationship with friends." Sam, 2nd

"I respect other people's privacy." Lucas, 5th

"I never betray friends." Jersey, 5th

"I show friendship by helping someone clean up after they are finished." William, 2nd

"Caring is helping out someone in need and being a friend to anyone that is alone." - Hannah, 5th

"Friendship is having friends and being nice and caring." - Marianna, 5th

"It means always having someone by your side to support you." - Caroline, 5th

"Persevering means to me even if things get hard, just keep swimming." - Aidan, 5th





## Acting Out Problems

Second grade students performed the play, “What’s Your Problem,” for Wood Road students, staff and parents. The students acted out math problems showing the rest of the school how to persevere with math and other encounters in life. One of the problems was about deleting games off a tablet. The kids acted out the games. Another problem had students making bread in chef costumes. A third, placed the students in a basketball game. All five second grade classes took part in the play.

- Emily Bagan



## Students Earn Scottie Day

Midway through winter, Wood Road students earned a much-deserved Scottie Day. Popcorn, dancing and games were the main hit on this cold winter day. There were also hearts to decorate and post onto the “All The Reasons Why We Love Wood Road” wall. All grades took part in the PBIS reward day.

- Ashley Hu



## From Page 1 - Chinese

“Hannah is such a big help, because her first language is Chinese,” McCarthy said, adding that she relies on Hannah often.

The Chinese after school enrichment program has been going on for six years at Wood Road, and Mrs. McCarthy said the number of students participating multiplies each year. The program runs for six weeks at a time. Students also have the opportunity to learn about the Chinese culture and language in BOCES summer camps. Additionally, students in the fourth and fifth grade scholar groups fit in an hour of Chinese lessons a week for 15 weeks. McCarthy hopes to see Chinese as one of the foreign language options in the middle school one day. Currently, middle school students have the opportunity to take online and after school classes, and SUNY Adirondack will offer college credit classes to students who complete the sequential online classes.

Mrs. McCarthy said she loves teaching and learning about other cultures and hopes that the Chinese program continues to grow at Wood Road and throughout the district.



## Robotics team receives recognition

The Wood Road Robotics Team, Motors In Action, received recognition from district board members at a recent board meeting. In December, the team qualified for the opportunity to advance to a semi-final tournament which took place in February.



## First grade celebrates reading

In March, the first grade team celebrated Read Across America Day and Dr. Seuss's birthday. The day is a nationwide reading celebration.