

# Mustang Musings

MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



*"The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide you're not going to stay where you are." —J.P. Morgan*

*November/December 2021*

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

It will be no surprise to hear Student Safety is the primary concern for all members of the faculty and staff at MCS. It is even more so for me, as the Superintendent. Most parents who drop off their students in the morning have seen me out there helping direct traffic, to accommodate the influx of vehicles, to assist students and families in the crosswalk, and scratch the occasional pooh. This seemed a necessary task, given the over 50 vehicles we usually see every weekday.

The afternoon tends to be a little messier, and worrisome for me. I am working with local experts to create a compre-

hensive redesign of drop off and pick up procedures that enhances student safety during the morning and afternoon rush. It may take a while, as funding and logistics are finalized, and local departments become involved in the solution. I know our combined goal is to make sure EVERYONE who comes and goes does so safely. Thank you in advance for your patience as this project moves forward.

Best Wishes, All!

—Dr. "Budd" Babbie

## HONOR SOCIETY 2021/2022

October 7, 2021, marked the induction day for the National Honor Society for the 2021-2022 school year. This year Morris' honor program was advised by a new advisor, Mrs.Vunk. Mrs.Vunk plans on keeping "a similar format from last year" and wants to involve all members to make decisions as a group and lead charge in making positive change in our school and community. Being an honors student means that you are a "Role model and leader within the school;" honor students also "take initiative and make positive impacts on the community while maintaining good scholarship and study habits."

If you are looking to be the next group of privileged and respected students to be trusted with the honor of being an



honors student, you have to have an overall average of at least a 90% and then be invited to apply based on a school-wide survey filled in by faculty and staff. If invited, students will apply to a committee of five teachers to defend how they "demonstrate good leadership, character, and service." This year's hard working inductees are *Maddie Coleman, Asa Dugan, Willam Sawyer King, Maiya King, Yana King, Tatianna McAdams, Noah Moore, Everett Pondofino, Aislinn Ray, Jessica Walling, Tiger Stancil, Lincoln Waffle, and Aiden Moore*. They join current members *Jon Child, Ethan Franklin, Mackenzie Graves, Alex Page, Carissa Richards, Hannah Sawyer, and Hannah Pope*.

Now that they have earned their spots in the Honor Society ranks, these students and the current members must complete 50 hours of service each per school year in the school and community. All of these students will strive to make a positive difference in the world.

—Aislinn Ray, Sophomore



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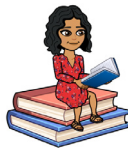
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# LIBRARY NEWS

Welcome back to a new school year! There are new changes in our MCS library! Many of you have known me as the Grade 6 teacher for the past eleven years. This year, I am excited to take on the role of Literacy/Library teacher. After doing library on a cart during my prep periods last year, we are so pleased to have the students back in the library taking out books. We have gotten many wonderful new books this fall for all ages. We also received a book set donation from the Rotary Club! You can check out those titles on display in the hallway outside the library. There is also access to numerous books on-line through SORA for students and parents. Library looks a little different than it has in the past. There is a strong literacy focus with themed stories and literacy activities. As the Literacy/Library teacher, it is still my goal to encourage a love of books, reading and listening to stories. Positive interactions with books can have a big impact on student reading and comprehension skills. Encourage your children to take out books and to tell you about them. Make reading a family activity.



Together we can create a life-long love of reading!

Feel free to reach out to me with any questions at [cmackey@morriscsd.org](mailto:cmackey@morriscsd.org).

You can find me in the library!

—Mrs. Courtney Mackey, Literacy/Library



PreK is learning about My School, My Body and My Feelings.

# DIGITAL NEWSLETTER

Going green by making the newsletter digital certainly helped save money for the district, and it was good for the environment. The District will continue this practice this year as well. You may access the newsletter under the “Newsletter” tab on the District web page. You may also access the calendar on-line under “Calendar of Events” and in the Athletics tab.

If you do not have computer access and/or would like a hard copy of the newsletter sent directly to you, please call the School’s District Office at (607) 263-6102 to request a copy be mailed to you.

*Thank you for your understanding and support in this matter.*

# WELCOME NEW FACULTY & STAFF



**Jenna Turner**

Hello, Morris! Let me take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Jenna Turner, and I am the new ninth and tenth grade English teacher.

I graduated from MCS in 2013 and continued my education at SUNY Oneonta, where I received my Bachelor's and Master's Degree. Although I had every intention of pursuing a teaching position immediately after college, I was offered a job working in the Faculty Center at SUNY Oneonta. This position allowed me to broaden my knowledge of educational theory and best practices. Although I thoroughly enjoyed the collegiate level, I missed working with students, an opportunity I wasn't afforded at my last position.

In my free time I enjoy being active. This comes in many forms, but you can often find me biking, hiking, or running (despite the utmost contempt). I also love traveling whenever possible and am an avid reader.

I am ecstatic to have the opportunity to work with and learn from so many of the very educators that inspired me to pursue a career in teaching. I can't wait to see what this year brings.



**Jen Roberts**

Hello! My name is Jen Roberts, and I am so excited to be working as the school's speech-language pathologist (SLP)! I received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from SUNY Oswego and then traveled even further north to earn my Master's degree in Communication Disorders

and Sciences at SUNY Plattsburgh. I began my career at Afton Central School where I worked as an SLP for 12 years.

I grew up in Norwich and now live there with my husband and two kids. I also have two dogs and a pig... yes, a pet pig. When I am not in school, I enjoy reading, going on walks, baking, and playing board games with my family.

I am looking forward to making connections with students, staff, and parents in the Morris School community. Here's to a great school year!



**Leslie Picinich**

Hello, my name is Leslie Picinich. I am thankful to be part of the Morris faculty. During the past nine years, I have been teaching at SUNY Oneonta instructing in the teacher preparation program. Previously, I taught kinder-

garten, third grade and fifth grade at St. Mary's school in Oneonta. Before that, I taught second grade at Charlotte Valley School in Davenport. It's great to be back in elementary education and working with the fourth graders this year. Their enthusiasm and energy is inspiring!

In my free time, I enjoy hiking, biking, and playing pickleball. Although both of my children are grown, my yellow labrador keeps me busy when I am not at school. I look forward to getting to know my colleagues, students and community members at Morris. Best wishes for a wonderful year ahead for us all.



**Morgan Westbrook**

Hi, everyone! My name is Morgan Westbrook and I am the new Grade 5 Math and Science teacher at Morris Central School. I received my Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from SUNY Oneonta and had the pleasure of completing a portion of my student teaching at MCS three years ago with Mrs. Mackey. After graduating with my undergraduate degree, I moved to South Carolina where I taught in a self-

contained fifth grade classroom for three years. Although I loved living in the south and made a lot of friends, I missed my family and decided to move back.

Since moving back to the area this summer, I purchased my first home and am excited to be taking on home improvement projects in the near future. In my free time I enjoy hiking, improving my fitness at the gym, and playing with my dog, Trooper. I am very excited to be back at MCS and love that I have the opportunity to teach where my career initially began. I can't wait to become a part of the close knit community that Morris has to offer. I wish you all the best this school year.

# WELCOME NEW FACULTY & STAFF



## Sarah Smith

Greetings to the Morris community! My name is Sarah Smith, and I am so excited to join Morris Central School as the new grade 6 teacher!

I grew up in Central New York, and attended SUNY Potsdam for both my Bachelor of Arts degree (in theatre and acting), and my Master's of Science in Teaching degree (in childhood education). I spent two years teaching in a grade 5-6 behavior adjustment classroom for Herkimer BOCES, and then spent another three years teaching at Clinton Central School district as a grade 6 teacher. I moved to Orlando, Florida, in 2018, and taught one year in grade 5, and then spent another two years as a grade 8 English teacher. The pandemic changed my perspective on being so far away from my family, and ultimately led to the decision of moving back to New York. I am so pleased with my choice, as Morris is proving to be such a wonderful place to learn, work, and grow!

After school hours, you can find me at Ondrea's CenterStage dance studio where I teach dance! I have been with the studio since 2011, and even taught some virtual classes during the shut down while I was still away in Orlando! My specialties include tap and musical theatre. I also enjoy taking voice lessons and participating in local community theater productions, usually during the summer months. On days that I am home, I love cuddling with my fur-babies, Kensington Lane and Freddie Mercury, who are my mischievous (but sweet) rescue cats. I am also an avid reader, enjoy painting, and am a full-fledged coffee addict.

I am looking forward to a fantastic year! Thank you for sharing your children with me, I cannot wait to see everything we accomplish and learn together!



## Trista Hilts

I am from Edmeston. I am a new teacher's aid at MCS.

I enjoy being outside. Horseback riding and camping are two of my favorite outdoor activities.

My family includes my boyfriend and my son.

I look forward to all and any opportunities that come my way here at Morris.



## Morris' New Spanish Teacher

Last year, as most of the school knows, our beloved Mrs. Telfer retired. This year, a new Spanish teacher came in. His name is Mr. Rhone. Mr. Rhone has been teaching for 22 years and has previously taught at Statesville High School, Andes Central School, and Sidney Central School.

### About Mr. Rhone

Mr. Rhone currently lives in the town of South New Berlin. He lives with his two children, Mila and Finley, his wife, his dog Hunter, two Guinea Pigs named Pirate and Squeakers, and "three very loud Guinea Hens."

### How He Came to Teach Spanish

Mr. Rhone got into Spanish because he had lived in Mexico for a year after high school and fell in love with the people there and their culture. He went to study for a semester in Salamanca, Spain, in his junior year of college. He said, "It was fascinating to compare the two cultures and differences in language." He loves teaching Spanish for many reasons, but the biggest one is that he enjoys being around young people. He said, "I like their energy and they force me to continue being a learner."

### What the Students are Saying

Of course, different teachers will have different methods of teaching, so students were a little thrown off by the fact that Mr. Rhone spoke mostly Spanish when they met him. However, once they got used to it, they realized Mr. Rhone is a really great teacher.

—Tatiana McAdams, Sophomore

## OH, SO POE

It was aptly a dull, dark, and dreary time of year when Mrs. Waffle and her ELA 11 students went on a spooky field trip to Hillington Cemetery to celebrate the end of a unit on Edgar Allen Poe. It drizzled the whole time they walked around the cemetery, but the students didn't mind. While there they learned about a piece of interesting fact or two about this cemetery as well as gathered inspiration from the trip to help them write a spooky story like E. A. Poe. Students were surprised at how peaceful the cemetery was as well as how interesting it could be to take a walk through it. Logan Dunham was impressed "by how old some of the graves were."

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, English

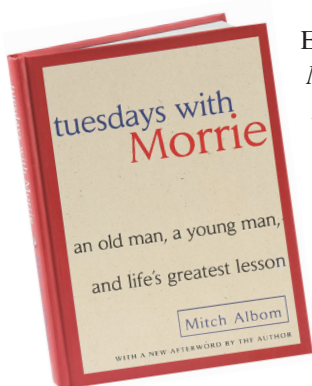


## ENGLISH 12

Mrs. Waffle a MCS that has been teaching since 1998 and currently teaches one section of English 12. Right now we are in the middle of a new unit involving a book called *Tuesdays with Morrie* by famous sports writer Mitch Albom. The book is about a professor with a disease called ALS. The book deals with relationships and how Morrie lives his life even though he knows he is going to die. I think the seniors of this class could definitely learn something from this unit, including myself. Morrie teaches readers many life lessons, but one we can all value is that we need to live our best lives even if obstacles get in our way.

I asked *Laura Foote* what she liked about English 12 so far this year and she said, "I really enjoyed playing Kahoot as our test on elements of a short story, I also really liked some of the short stories we have read already." *Ian Payne* said he is enjoying English this year because there is less pressure than in previous years." *Noah Burlison* said he enjoys all things poetry.

—Kelsey Chase, Senior



## VARSITY BOYS SOCCER

This year the Varsity Boys Soccer team was obviously all about soccer, but we were also all about bonding. At the start of the season, the boys had breakfast and a dinner at The Child House. One meal the boys were able to celebrate Mr. Roser's birthday. Then they had another dinner at the Morlock's also celebrated Jacob's birthday. After some games the boys enjoyed pizza at Scotty's as well.

This is Coach Roser's first year the MCS Varsity Boys Soccer Coach. I decided to interview him about being a coach and a teacher and on the season.

**Wednesday September 29, 2021.**

**Q:** What are/were your expectations for this season?

**Mr. Roser:** To make sectionals. Make Tri-Valley, have an above .500 record.

**Q:** What is your opinion of the team bonding activities?

**Mr. Roser:** They are good opportunities to get closer as a team outside of practice and school. They are also good before games.

**Q:** What is your favorite thing as a coach?

**Mr. Roser:** Seeing the players develop on and off the field, seeing them mature into men.

**Q:** Why did you decide to become a coach?

**Mr. Roser:** 1) I have a passion for sports 2) I want to make the players the best they can be 3) Sports are a pretty big part of my life.

**Q:** What do you think made the most difference during the games that shifted it to one side or the other?

**Mr. Roser:** Winning 50/50s, not being lazy, having heart.

**Q:** What was your favorite or is your favorite moment of the season?

**Mr. Roser:** Second place in the Downsville Tournament, beating Edmeston at HoCo, and bonding with the team.

All in all, it appeared that he was a relatively easy-going guy that had his priorities set that helped us improve as a team and men on and off the field. He showed some of us how to be men and how to be mature enough to keep playing through a call we didn't agree with or a call that was completely missed. He taught some of us how to stay composed under high pressure situations. He did a lot of fun drills in practice that may have seemed uncoordinated but they worked and helped us greatly, for example, "touch-post." It seems extremely messy and jumbled, but it helped us greatly to get shots off quickly regardless of the touch.

—Joshua Benjamin, Junior



## VARSITY GIRLS SOCCER

In past years at Morris Central School, our school has created a strong athletic program that has helped to improve athletes on and off the field. However this year, things have changed. The amount of people being able to participate has decreased, leaving our girls varsity team desperate for new players. In order for our team to be able to compete, we needed to recruit many young athletes and teach them the game of soccer from scratch. The beginning of the season was scary, but everyone pushed through to help improve their own soccer skills and IQ of the game. And as we saw the season go on, we had seen the big improvements that we had worked so hard for all season. Coach Flint said “When everyone works on doing a little better, the results are amazing. This young team has worked hard all season to improve their skills and understanding of the game to better the team. This year has been filled with leadership by the returning players who have guided the young players to better themselves. It has been a group effort this year to improve our team. The best quotation for this team is “Don’t try to be the best kid on your team. Try to be the best for your team.” Coach Flint has done, and will continue to do an amazing job at growing the knowledge of soccer for returning and new players. Seniors had also made huge efforts to teach new athletes the positions of the field, as well as learn new positions themselves. The unmeasurable efforts that were put in this year will not be forgotten as our young team had worked hard to get into the top four in the Tri-Valley League and continued to play in sectionals.

—Hannah Wist, Freshman



## CROSS COUNTRY

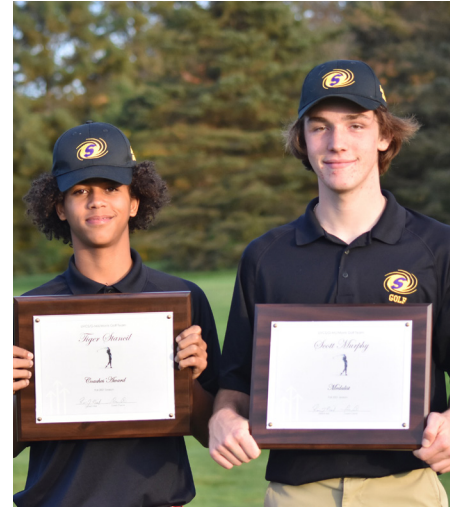
Cross-Country had a small team this year, but they worked hard and had a lot of fun. This year we combined with Milford to give us a total of five competing runners. These boys trained extremely hard since mid-August and I foresee a great future for Morris XC. Freshman, Ben Newell said, “I liked the way our coach pushed us every day to work harder.” Aaron Pondolino said,

In preparation for the spring track season, Noah Burlison, Jackson Harp, and Sebastian Babbie practiced their shot put skills almost everyday with volunteer coach Mike D’Amico. Yana King throws discus as does Noah. The boys are trying to get Yana to throw shot put in the spring too as her first attempt was 22 feet which is “not bad at all,” said Noah. Noah loves throwing shot put. He said, “Throwing shot put has been one of the best decisions in my high school career. It is fun.”



# GOLF

Morris used to have a very good golf team, but due to various reasons, including all the teams in the tri-valley dropping golf as a sport, golf went by the wayside for MCS athletes. However, this year, MCS golfers were able to get back in the competition swing of things when they merged with UV, who also had low numbers for their team this year. Scott Murphy and Tiger Stancil ended up being part of the top six who competed in matches this fall. They did so well, that they brought home awards for their willingness to learn the sport and their skill.



It is good to be able to watch games again.



## OUTDOOR CLUB

Outdoor club is a new offering this year for junior high and high school students. Due to the circumstances of the last couple of years, students had little opportunity to get outside and do fun activities with their friends, so our former superintendent, Mr. Sheldon, set aside part of the district's COVID relief fund for this club. The club includes monthly outings such as mountain biking, hiking, kayaking, and zip lining. The following is an interview with Mrs. Deysenroth in regards to outdoor club.

**Q:** Can you tell me about your first trip?

**A:** Our September trip was to Tupper Lake, NY, where we visited The Wild Center. We saw their Adirondack animals exhibit (the otters were so cute!), hiked to the Racquet River, climbed on a rope spider web suspended above the tree tops and took pictures in a life size bald eagle's nest.

**Q:** How many kids are participating?

**A:** There are 24 members in the Outdoor Club. Those able to attend the September trip were *Jaden Kolka, Georgia Kolka, Natalie Barley, Maddie Coleman, Keirnan Burke, Ali Farmer, Kaylee Kolka, Aislinn Ray, Evelyn Burke, Yana King and Maiya King.*

**Q:** What was planned for your next trip?

**A:** Our October trip was mountain biking in Forestport, NY, and our November trip will be a hike up Vroman's Nose mountain in Middleburgh, NY.

Those who attended the October trip were *Jaden, Georgia, and Kaylee Kolka, Lucas Waffle, Everett and Aaron Pondolfino, Kiernan Burke, Yana, Maiya, and Sawyer King.* In addition, Mrs. Waffle and Mrs. Grant and her son were able to attend.

Anyone wishing to join outdoor club should contact Mrs. Deysenroth. Students are welcome to pick and choose what outings interest them. Attendance at all trips is not required.

— *Carissa Richards, Junior*



## ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE



# HOMECOMING

Homecoming weekend began the Monday before with the beginning of Spirit Week which consisted of several days of fun dressing up: Monday was Team Sports Day. The fun days were chosen by the Student Council: Tuesday was Twin Day, Wednesday was Decade Day, Thursday was Hawaiian Day, and, of course, Friday was Blue and White Day. MCS Students outdid themselves this year. Especially on Hawaiian Day and Blue and White Day.

Even though we could not have our traditional pep rally, students were able to enjoy the Booster Club sponsored Friday Night Homecoming activities. Rain threatened this year again, but held off. Students enjoyed a bonfire (Thank you to the Morris Fire Department for making sure we were safe). They also enjoyed dunking coaches, teachers, staff, administrators, and board members in the very popular dunk tank. The younger kids enjoyed the bounce houses and cow plop bingo as well.

Each team was formally introduced and celebrated by the Booster Club. And toward the end of the evening Homecoming King, Queen were announced. Congrats to Homecoming King and Queen, Seniors, *Alex Page* and *Maddie Aikins*.

Saturday, started with the modified soccer team, who tied. Both boys and girls varsity teams won. The girls won even though they did not play the whole game because it started downpouring. The rain did not stop the fans from watching or the alumni from playing their soccer game though. This year the odd year team outscored the even year team.

Through it all The Booster Club made signs for families, they cooked in the concession stand, hosted a fun night, and they really supported MCS athletes.



## DUNK TANK AT #HOCO21



During the festivities of Homecoming Booster Club hosted a dunk tank. The people in the dunk tank were Mr. Harmer, Ms. Smith, Mr. Tilley, Mrs. Waffle, Mr. Packard, Mr. Iannelli, Mrs. Coyle, Coach Joy, Dr. Babbie, and Ms. Garry. Ms. Garry was dunked 13 times, Mrs. Waffle was dunked 13 times, Mr. Iannelli was dunked 13 times. Those people were dunked the most. The next people were Dr. Babbie with 12, Mr. Packard with 11, and Mr. Harmer with 10. The person with the least amount of dunks was Mrs. Smith with four, but that does not mean there were not lines to try to dunk all of those volunteers a mile long. Students were turned away when the time was up for each dunk volunteer..

*Maddie Coleman* wanted to dunk Mrs. Smith because she was first up. People wanted to dunk Mr. Harmer because he thought some people couldn't do it. *Garrett Aikins* wanted to dunk his Uncle, Coach Joy because of the sprints he made his team do during basketball season. *Maddie Aikins* and *Hannah Wist* wanted to dunk Mr. Iannelli because he didn't want to be dunked. I wanted to dunk him because he didn't think I could do it and I dunked him twice. *JJ* wanted to see Mr. Packard get dunked because he was wearing clothes of the team we were gonna play the next day and he didn't like that. *Alex* wanted

to dunk Mr. Tilley because he said "he would not let me live it down if I didn't try and get him first try" which he did. Mrs. Waffle was a popular target of the elementary students because they thought it would be funny.

Ms. Garry wanted to be in the dunk tank because she thought no one would do it. She also thought that it would be fun. It was, but the water in the tank was cold.

The most popular in my opinion was Mr. Harmer and Mr. Iannelli because they had the longest lines and they told a bunch of people that they couldn't and everyone wanted to show them that they could.

Mrs. Waffle said, "I was reluctant to do it at first, but I did it anyway. Everyone seemed to enjoy participating or watching. It was fun and I would do it again."

—Ethan Franklin, Junior



## SPIRIT WEEK

The upperclassmen really enjoyed Hawaiian Day during Spirit Week, but students found it interesting to learn it was a normal day for junior *Sabastian Babbie* who wears Hawaiian shirts every day.

The elementary students took Blue and White Day to a whole new level of awesome!



# PLAYGROUND



Elementary students enjoy recess more than any other activity in school.

## THREE CHEERS FOR . . .

- \* The fall sports teams for working hard this season. It was good to see you playing!
- \* All the fans who showed up to the games, rain or shine.
- \* The support staff, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and maintenance people for keeping us all safe, fed, and the building and grounds looking clean
- \* The new Sophomore Class Officers: President, *Yana King*; Vice President, *Maddie Coleman*; Secretary, *William King*; Treasurer, *Maiya King*, and Representatives, *Noah Moore*, *Maddie Coleman*, *Asa Dugan*, *Yana King*, *Jessica Walling*, *Tatiana McAdams*, and *Everett Pondolfino*. Congratulations!
- \* To all who supported the sophomore class by purchasing mums in September! It was a successful fundraiser! Thanks!
- \* Our new National Honor Society members. Congratulations!
- \* New Senior Class Officers: President, *Alex Page*; Vice President, *Triana Hawkins*; Treasurer, *Aiden Moore*, and Secretary, *Hannah Pope*. Congratulations!
- \* The Booster Club for an AWESOME homecoming!
- \* The faculty, staff, administration, coaches, and Board of Education member who volunteered for the dunk tank! So much fun!!!
- \* Welcome to all our new staff!
- \* The new yearbook staff officers: Editor-in-Chief, *Carissa Richards*; Copy Editor, *Hannah Wist*; Photo Editor, *Kelsey Chase*; Design Editor, *Noah Burlison*, and Business Manager/Treasurer, *Ethan Franklin*
- \* 2021-22 Senior Band Officers: President, *Lincoln Waffle*; Vice President, *Everett Pondolfino*; Co-Secretaries, *Rachel Hill* and *Thomas Pondolfino*, and Treasurer, *Levi Waffle*
- \* Thanks to all the Seniors coming to school EXTRA early to practice for the Senior Play.: *Leah Rehrmann*, *Laurel Brigham*, *Jeffrey Bourgois*, *Landen Tyler*, *Fiona Ventura*, *Madison Aikins*, *Jackson Harp*, *Alex Page*, *Mackenzie Graves*
- \* New Junior Class Officers: President, *Hannah Swayer*; Vice President, *Jon Child*; Treasurer, *Lincoln Waffle*; Secretary, *Aaron Pondolfino*. Congratulations.
- \* *Hannah Swayer* and *Jon Child* running the Bottle Drive in September to raise money for their class!
- \* Mrs. Waffle for keeping the mums watered (when they arrived a week early) for the Sophomore Class!
- \* A big congratulations to *Ruby Jones*, *Jon Child*, *Jackson Harp* and *Aaron Pondolfino* for putting together and presenting to the Morris Rotary, on plastic waste and plastic film recycling! Amazing job!
- \* The new Outdoor Club. Two months and two very successful and fun trips!
- \* All the new club advisors for taking extra responsibilities! Students could not have so many clubs without you!
- \* Ms. Chicorelli for coming out of retirement to fill in as the Director of Pupil Personnel when we needed the help
- \* Ms. Kathy Smith for all your hard work! It has been an unusual year so far and you have had more work piled on your plate, but you are handling it like a champ!
- \* The students for being flexible and working hard in spite of the inconveniences of mandates.
- \* The New National Honor Society Officers: President, *Alex Page*; Vice President, *Mackenzie Graves*; Secretary, *Yana King*; Treasurer, *Aiden Moore*
- \* The New Spanish Club Officers: President, *Mackenzie Graves*; Vice President, *Alex Page*; Secretary, *Jessica Walling*; Treasurer, *Maiya King*; Representative, *Maddie Coleman*