



Mustang Musings

MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



"Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for"
—Zig Ziglar

November/December 2023

Congratulations!

On October 6, 2023, in a beautiful ceremony run by current National Honor Society (NHS) members and their advisor Mrs. JoAnn Fredette, new National Honor Society Members were inducted into NHS after Open House. Congratulations to the new members and kudos to the current members.



*Brodie Coleman**
Maddie Coleman
Samantha Coyle
Asa Dugan
*Alisandra Farmer**
*Robert Hill**
Magdalena King
Maiya King
William King
*Mason Linton**
Tatiana McAdams
Madison Moore

Noah Moore
Ethan Nisius
Everett Pondolfino
Aislinn Ray
Grace Schiller
Tiger Stancil
*Carter Swayer**
*Levi Waffle**
Jessica Walling
*Grace Wing**
Hannah Wist

*Newest Members of the Society

STUDENT VOICES, STUDENT CHOICES

Morris Student Council was selected to be a part of a special initiative through Otsego County called Student Voices, Student Choices. Student Voices, Student Choices is a project of the students and schools of Otsego County with support from the Community Foundation of Otsego County and other non-profit community organizations through funding and hands-on assistance to address a need in our community.

Over the next two months our MCS representatives: **Jessica Walling, Rachel Hill, Maddie Coleman, Everett Pondolfino** and **Aislinn Ray**, will research and identify a need in our community. Once a need has been identified, we will recruit a non-profit to help us to create a plan to address the identified need. On November 20, 2023, from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at Anderson Theater at Hartwick College, all the area schools will present their projects to local leaders and an audience of 200 people to compete for funding of up to \$5,000 to carry out our proposed plan. Family, friends and community members are encouraged to attend this event, so mark your calendars.

—Mrs. Diane Walling, Elementary Teacher and Student Council Advisor



On Thursday, September 21, 2023 Jessica Walling, Rachel Hill, Maddie Coleman, Everett Pondolfino attended a mentoring and public speaking workshop at Hartwick College as part of the Student Voices, Student Choices initiative.



NEWS FROM ADMINISTRATION

There are so many wonderful things happening at Morris Central School. We are off to a great start to the new school year! Our first few weeks were filled with a lot of learning, fun, athletics, and friendship. Both our Homecoming festivities and Open House were well-attended, and we enjoyed seeing families come out and support our students at these events. All of our boys and girls soccer teams, as well as, our cross-country runners have been working hard and competing with tenacity and spirit. We are proud of them!

As we continue with the 2023-2024 school year, I am thankful for your support as I transition into my new school building leader role at MCS. I have had the distinct pleasure of teaching many students in grades PK-12 for the past 22 years in this district. Throughout my time here at MCS I have grown to know what a wonderful community this is! I look forward to many more years of partnership with you and your children as we grow and learn together.

Please remember to check the school website and calendar for information regarding school events and activities. You can access the site at <http://www.morriscsd.org>. Also, watch our school Facebook page for all of the great things happening here at the school! As always please reach out with any questions or comments, we look forward to partnering with you to make this another fantastic year at MCS.

—Mrs. April Vunk

Morris Central School Board Members

Mary Dugan, President

Russell Tilley, Vice President

Emily Boss

Teresa DeLaurentiis

Wendy Moore

Morris Central School Administration

Jamie Maistros, Superintendent

Katharine Smith, Interim Principal

April Vunk, Intern Principal

Main Office (607) 263-6100

Guidance (607) 263-6116

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For submissions, calendar events or to request a printed copy, contact Judy Matson (jmatson@morriscsd.org) (607) 263-6102

or

Julene Waffle

(jwaffle@morriscsd.org)

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 Every 3rd Tuesday 9:30AM-6:00PM
 Regular hours for Clinic Monday thru Friday 8-4
 Call 607-263-2619 or 1-844-255-7242 for appointments or medication refills

FROM THE NURSE'S OFFICE

I hope everyone had a great start to the new school year! I just wanted to remind everyone that with back to school comes a lot of exposure to all kinds of germs. The best way to prevent germs from spreading is good hand washing and covering your coughs and sneezes.

Just a friendly reminder to please keep your kids at home if they are not feeling well. Our policy is that anyone experiencing a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting is to stay home until they are symptom free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine before returning to school. If you are unsure if your child is ready to return to school, please call the Nurse's Office at 607-263-6111 for assistance.

I'd also like to remind you that rapid COVID-19 tests are still available in the Nurse's Office free of charge.

I wish you all a happy and healthy school year!

—Mrs. Baker, School Nurse

NEW WEBPAGE
www.morriscsd.org
 You may have noticed MCS has a new webpage. Please check it out. It is full of important and useful information.

LIBERTY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

After an adventure-filled summer, the SUNY Morrisville Liberty Partnerships Program is officially taking root at MCS. With a current enrollment of thirty-nine students, LPP has had a vigorous start in Morris.

LPP was established in 1988 in order to address the significant dropout rate among youth in New York State. It's part of a state-wide program designed to provide support and/or services that will encourage middle and high school students to not only graduate high school but also be prepared to enter college or vocational school. This cooperative serves 5th-12th grade students in Morris, Unadilla Valley, Otselic Valley, Sherburne-Earlville, Bainbridge-Guilford, Norwich, and now, Sidney Central Schools.

The mission of the LPP is to PROVIDE participants with academic support, character and leadership development, and opportunities to give back to their communities through service-learning. Student/Family advocates ENCOURAGE participants to excel academically by providing career and college exploration and guidance. Students and families are able to ESTABLISH support systems and connect with available community resources. Participants also have opportunities to develop life, leadership, and job skills. The Liberty Partnerships Program is designed to GUIDE students toward academic advancement, personal development, and a successful transition into the next phase of their lives.

Our summer was filled with museum studies, a week of culinary delights, drone building and a drone-quidditch-style soccer tournament, hiking, swimming, kayaking, high-ropes courses, and a three day trip to the Oswegatchie FFA Educational Center in Croghan, NY (for those of you who know - that's no bologna ;-) and so much more!

The LPP room has been full and productive since the onset of the 2023-2024 school year. Our After-School Program is available to students each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday until 5:00 and we're already anticipating our first author/illustrator visit when Suzanne Bloom joins us in October!

For enrollment information contact Lisa Marino: lmario@morriscsd.org / marinola@morrisville.edu



Lucas Pope, 6th Grade



New to MCS is a program called Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP). This program helps support students and young adults ranging from 5th-12th grade. LPP supports systems that encourage and guide young people to become competent and compassionate members of society. The Liberty Partnership Program helps communities around us such as Otselic Valley Central School, Unadilla Valley School, Bainbridge-Guilford Central School, and so many more! The SUNY Morrisville Liberty Partnership's mission is to support students in every aspect of their academic and emotional development. Once students are enrolled, they are enrolled right through graduation. Mrs. Marino is in charge of Morris' LPP.

Some services that students and families can expect include character education, leadership development, personal, academic, and career advice, and so much more. The Liberty Partnership Program helps students with homework and classwork; it also helps kids who need or want extra help and resources they need. It also provides a safe and non-judgemental environment for students too.

One way to get the full view from the students about the program is to hear their view. Some of the student's views are as follows. **Hannah Moore** in 7th grade said, "My favorite part about the Liberty Partnership Program is the safe environment that gives students the support that they need as they grow up and make tough decisions." A sophomore, **Arrow**, said, "It's useful for receiving assistance and eating lunch in quiet." Another 7th grader, **Allison Wood**, said, "My favorite parts of this program are the trips and the many activities in the room we do." **Isabellah Williams**, a freshman, said, "It helps people find themselves." Finally, **Sierra Coyle**, a 7th grader said, "It is a safe space and people can get their work done with help or without if needed."

These ideas are from students in the program. There are many more! This program has been a very helpful resource for myself and others. It helps students feel like they belong without any judgment. It's truly an amazing program and people have benefited from the Liberty Partnership Program already.

—Kiarra Walker, Freshman

Welcome! New Faculty and Staff

BRIANNE THOMPSON **CHORUS AND MUSIC TEACHER**



I first fell in love with Music in Kindergarten when I begged my parents to allow me to take piano lessons (they made me wait a year, but I finally got my way in the first grade), and decided early on that I wanted to be a Music Teacher. I participated in Band (flute) and choir (alto) all throughout secondary school and college. I graduated from Hartwick College with a degree in Music Performance (piano being my major instrument) and have taught piano lessons and flute lessons privately. I am so excited to join the Mustang family and pass on my love of music to all of the students and staff. When I am not on the piano bench or in the classroom, I am most likely outside with my family (probably on a court or field watching one of my three boys playing a sport) or am at home with my pets (we have a German shepherd and two bearded dragons). I might also be in the barn spending time with the horses or at my fitness studio teaching exercise classes. I can't wait to get to know all of the students, staff, family, and community of the Morris Central School!

EILEEN HARTNETT **SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, GRADES 1-2**



I have two grown children and have always found them to be my best teachers! My son is on the autism spectrum; he is employed full-time, drives a car, and lives independently in Rochester, NY. It was a long road, and I am very proud of what he has accomplished. My daughter came to this area to study equine breeding and reproduction and has made Morris, NY, her home. Her life revolves around breeding and foaling at Leatherstocking Equine Center and running her business, Hartnett Racing.

I moved to this area in 2016 to accept a nursing position at Bassett Healthcare. Yes, you read that correctly! I have been a registered nurse for 47 years and then I decided to obtain a Master's Degree in elementary and special education. I worked as a Fourth Grade teacher for the Rochester City School District for eight years. It was a challenging experience that shaped me into the teacher I am today. I met my husband shortly after moving here, and we have been married for four years. We live on ten acres that keeps us busy spring through fall. We have two active dogs, Tex and Marley. The latter is mischievous, but Tex is well-trained! I spend my spare time knitting, reading, gardening and trying to beat my husband at Scrabble!

NICK CHASE **FIFTH GRADE MATH & SCIENCE**



Hello! My name is Nick Chase and I am the new Fifth Grade math and science teacher. My journey to the classroom was a bit unconventional, but I'm confident it has led me to where I belong. Originally, I was on the path to becoming a lawyer. However, an opportunity to substitute teach in college unveiled a passion for education, leading me to shift gears and pursue teaching certification. I'm incredibly thankful to be working alongside Mrs. Bjorvand, who was my Fifth Grade teacher 13 short years ago. She was a driving force behind my decision to become part of the Morris family. I'm excited to forge new connections with students, staff, and community alike. I am thrilled to be a part of the Morris community, and I look forward to a great year.

KYLE SZOKOLI **SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER**



My name is Kyle Szokoli, and I was recently hired at Morris to become the new Secondary Special Education Teacher. Growing up in a family where both of my parents were educators, I always thought teaching was a cool profession, but it was not something that I wanted to do. As I grew up, I realized the importance of teachers not only in the classroom but in life as well. Seeing the positive impact a teacher can have on their students inspired me to want to study education and become a teacher in the future. Even though I found my calling in teaching here, I am not from the upstate area and I never could have pictured myself working here. I always thought that I would work where I am from (Long Island), but I am ecstatic to have been given the opportunity to work in Morris as this community is amazing. I wouldn't change it for a thing! In addition to teaching, I have a huge passion for sports. I played and now coach football at Hartwick College, and I look forward to the possibility of coaching sports here at Morris! I am super thrilled to be a part of the staff here at Morris and look forward to having an amazing school year!

VALERIE GOULD **TEACHER AID**



Hello! I am the new Teacher Aid for the Second Grade, and I help out in the Pre-K classroom. I live in Edmeston. I am happily married with two beautiful girls; I love to watch my girls play sports and husband race cars on a dirt track. Everyone at Morris has been super nice.

**RYAN MASON
SCHOOL COUNSELOR**



Hello. I am currently in my twenty-second year as a school counselor and am extremely excited to be a part of the Morris team. I enjoy playing drums, hiking, and traveling. I look forward to getting to know you all!

**BETH BUBADIAS
HEAD BUS DRIVER**



Hello! I was hired in August as the new head bus driver. I am the mother of three grown children and the grandmother of five. If you want to get me talking, ask me about my grandbabies. I moved from NJ in July of 2022. I worked for a school district there as a bus driver, trip scheduler, and new driver trainer. Besides working for the school, I also taught horseback riding for nearly 20 years. I taught many disciplines including Hunter Jumpers, Equitation, Western Pleasure, Western Speed, and Dressage both English and Western. I currently have ten of my retired lesson horses living out their lives in leisure. I am looking forward to getting to know all of the Morris Central School Family.



**YOU ARE INVITED!
JOIN US FOR A MAGICAL NIGHT OF MUSIC
AT THE MORRIS MUSIC DEPARTMENT
WINTER CONCERT!**

- **Date:** December 12
- **Time:** 7:00 PM
- **Location:** Morris School Auditorium

Experience the joy of the season with our talented 7th-12th grade musicians as they bring your favorite holiday tunes to life, including classics such as “Santa Claus is Coming to Town” and “How the Grinch Stole Christmas.”

Don’t miss this festive evening filled with enchanting melodies and holiday spirit. Bring your friends and family for a heartwarming musical celebration!

—Mrs. Deanna Perkosky and Mrs. Brianne Thompson,
The Music Department



**MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL
SENIOR CITIZEN LUNCHEON**

- **December 21, 2023**
- **10:30-11:30 a.m.**

The Morris Central School Student Council is proud to announce that we will host our Senior Citizen Luncheon at MCS on December 21! Seniors who reside in the Morris School District, please join us for a delicious roast pork dinner, time to converse with friends, staff, and students, and a chance to enjoy the festive entertainment.

RSVP to Diane Walling by December 15 at 263-6100.



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| • Richfield Springs | • Sidney | |
| • Sherburne-Earlville | • Springbrook | • Stamford |
| • South Kortright | • Worcester | |
| • Unadilla Valley | | |

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- Then press/click on the QR code on your screen.
- Fill out the Electronic Web form to enroll in the School-Based Health Center today!

WHAT IS BOCES AND WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS

BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Service) is a public organization that was created by the New York State legislature in 1948. It provides shared educational programs and services to school districts. The courses that are offered at our BOCES today include Automotive Service Technician, Building Trades, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Health occupations, Information Technologies, Natural Resources Occupations, New Vision Engineering, New Visions Health Care Professions, Visual Arts Media Technologies, Welding and Metal Fabrication, and Mechatronics.

The OAOB BOCES is located in Milford, NY. BOCES is offered to all Otsego County schools. There are many juniors and seniors in our school who are taking advantage of this program. The students who are taking advantage of this program are doing it to get work experience or get a job right after graduating. They graduate from BOCES and MCS with many certifications and licenses to help them be competitive applicants for jobs after high school. Some of the BOCES students thought BOCES was better than school. Here's what some of them said:

Casey Tuttle ('24) enjoys the Automotive program. He says his program is "hands-on and teaches us useful skills for the workforce. BOCES actually puts us in real life scenarios and teaches skills we will need after graduation." He says, "It's fun, and I know, in the end, I'm going to make good money. I'd rather do hands-on things than regular school."

Dakota Gardner ('25) is also in the Automotive program. He says, "Getting to run equipment and better my education" is pretty great. He continued with "BOCES gives more opportunities and opens up the job spectrum."

Lorissa Johnston ('24) is in the Welding program. She loves it because it allows her to be "very creative. It also gives me work experience." **Jayden Kolka** ('25) is also in the Welding program. He says "My favorite part is learning how to work on an engine. BOCES gives you real life work experience."

One student who is in the Visual Arts program is **Georgia Kolka** ('25). She likes the program because "It's hands-on and fun. BOCES gives me the skills I need for work experience."

Zeithan Dunham ('25) Natural Resource Occupations Programs. There he will earn certifications that allow him to operate heavy equipment and he will earn his CDL as well.

Overall, BOCES programs are great as an alternative to regular school. The best part is that students still earn high school diplomas, but they graduate ready to join the workforce with skills under their belts.

—*Kaylee Kolka*, Senior

NEW BOTTLE DRIVE TRADITION



MCS high schoolers have started a new tradition this year. Every third Saturday of the month, all year long, 9-12 graders will host a bottle drive in the main parking lot.

July-September, seniors will collect. November-December will be the junior class's time to collect. January-March will be the freshman, 106 and the sophomores will host April-June.

ALL ABOUT BOCES NEW VISIONS PROGRAMS

BOCES stands for Boards of Cooperative Educational Services and offers many programs for high school students to start on their way to a trade of their choice. BOCES offers a lot of training and often supplies students with jobs while in the program and a job when they get out. BOCES New Visions is another category of BOCES offered only to seniors. It is an extremely selective program that requires students to apply, get accepted, and pay for their program of choice. This is different from the standard BOCES program that is free for students and open to all. New Visions has intense trades for students to study, such as Business Management, Communications, Education, Engineering Technology, Health Professions, Legal Professions, and Veterinary Science. New Visions is similar to the environment of college. It encourages students to learn how to get work done on their time, put in the effort, and do their bests.

WHO GOT IN THIS YEAR AND WHAT DO THEY THINK?

This year, Morris' own **Maiya King** ('24) and **William King** ('24) were accepted to New Visions in Health Professions and Engineering Technology, respectively. Both are enjoying four class days, but the difficulty of classes more than makes up for the lack of extracurriculars during the school day. The classes are mostly AP and college level to further challenge and prepare students for the future. William King commented, "New Visions Engineering is a great opportunity to learn all about engineering, as well as transition from high-school to college."

—*Tatiana McAdams* ('24), Senior

BOOSTER CLUB—JOIN THE TEAM!

The Morris Central Booster Club is a community-wide organization that helps provide support to the student athletes at Morris Central School. In the past, the Booster Club has helped the sports teams pay for their warmups and equipment, as well as providing concessions and a spirit stand at each home game. Parents of current and upcoming athletes have been a part of this organization, as well as parents of non-athletes who still want to be involved with the community. Every year, Booster Club takes a large role in the planning and production of Homecoming. They provide food, decorations, senior banners, and gifts for our senior athletes in addition to running many activities at the HoCo carnival. Anyone is able to join the club, and it is highly encouraged to grow the program. Current member Denise Wist said, “It takes a lot of people to cover concessions, do fundraisers such as golf tournaments, the Christmas basketball tournaments, ordering and selling spirit shop merchandise, and encouraging local businesses to donate to support our athletes.” More members and support are always encouraged. It is a great way to stay connected with different parts of the community.

Booster Club has helped a great deal with the operation of our athletic events. The overwhelming support from families has made it possible for athletes to enjoy sports and the things that come with them. Last year both varsity soccer teams went to the Tri-Valley Championship games, and the Booster Club made sure to make the surrounding days extra special. The night before, families made pasta dinners for both teams and made sure the athletes were set on drinks, food, and a place to meet. The morning of the games the Booster Club put out word to meet in town and send off both teams, which was a super fun experience as an athlete. They made goody bags, decorated the buses, the community, and the surrounding area at the game location, making it a very memorable day for everyone. The Booster Club always makes sure to be involved and create a better atmosphere for the athletes and community. They hope with new members this kind of support can continue in the future.

—Hannah Wist, Junior

WATERSHED FIELD EXPERIENCE

Students from College Biology and Environmental Studies got dirty in the Butternut Creek as they sampled macroinvertebrates and tested the creek’s water quality with Mrs. Fredette and Ms. Grant. The MCS Environmental Studies class has been collecting data monthly on the Butternut since 2017, for the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative and the Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring, along with Otsego County Conservation Association.

This year, Morris Central School, along with Milford Central School, will be participating in the Upper Susquehanna Watershed Project, funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, through Otsego County Conservation Association. Students will be working on a cross-curricular watershed study, looking at everything from historical data to stream chemistry and beyond, to determine how humans have impacted the Butternut Creek watershed, and the relationship we have to the Susquehanna Watershed and the Chesapeake Bay.

This project will include field trips, guest presenters, and environmental action projects.

—Mrs. Heather Grant and Mrs. JoAnne Fredette



Hannah sampling for macroinvertebrates



Identifying macroinvertebrates



Max and Delaney look for bugs!



Testing dissolved oxygen

504 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Morris Central School does not discriminate in employment or in the education programs and activities which it operates on the basis of sex, race or handicap in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, *504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

SECTION 1

If any person believes that Morris Central School or any of the district's staff has inadequately applied the principles or regulations of (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) *504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or (4) the ADA, that person may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, to the district's compliance officer.

When a staff member or a student is accused of violating the principles or regulations of Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or ADA they will be notified in the presence of their Union Representative or immediate supervisor if a staff member, or their guardian if they are a student.

Morris Central School recognizes that both the complainant and the accused have strong interests in maintaining confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of all parties will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, take appropriate action, and to comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

All procedures taken by Morris Central School throughout the investigation will be in accordance with the appropriate New York State and Federal laws.

SECTION 2

The complaint shall discuss the grievance informally with the compliance officer, who shall investigate the complaint and respond in writing to the complainant.

The complainant may thereafter initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

Step (a):

A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the compliance officer within seven (7) days of receipt of the response to the grievance. The compliance officer shall further investigate the matters contained in the grievance and shall reply in writing to the complainant within seven days. The accused may respond in writing if he/she wishes.

Step (b):

If the complainant or the accused wishes to appeal the decision of the compliance officer, the complainant or the accused may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent within seven (7) days after receipt of the compliance officer's response. The Superintendent

shall meet with the complainant or the accused and any representative and make such other inquiries which the Superintendent deems appropriate.

Thereafter, the Superintendent shall set forth a conclusion and respond in writing to the complainant within fourteen (14) days.

Step (c):

If the complainant or the accused is not satisfied with the conclusion of the Superintendent, the complainant or the accused may appeal through a signed, written statement to the Board of Education within seven (7) days of receipt of the Superintendent's response in step (b). In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Education shall meet with the complainant or the accused and any representative within thirty (30) days of receipt of such an appeal. The Board's written disposition of the appeal shall be sent to the complainant or the accused within ten (10) days of this meeting.

Step (d):

If the complainant feels the grievance has not been satisfactorily settled at Step (c), further appeal may be made to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20201.

SECTION 3

The compliance officers are Caitlin Smith and April Vunk.

The compliance officer, upon request, will provide a copy of the district's grievance procedure to any employee or student of the district.

A copy of each of the Acts and Regulations upon which this notice is based will be made available upon written request directed to the district's compliance officer.

When used in this policy, days shall mean calendar days. The words person and complainant shall include an employee as well as a student of the district.

Inquiries concerning the nondiscriminatory policy may be made to the Director, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20201.



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

Check out posts about upcoming events and admire the creative learning we do at MCS. Our Facebook wall is updated all the time with interesting things!

ELA 12

ELA 12 began the year with review of the parts of a piece of fiction in a short story unit. The favorite stories were "The Sniper" by Liam O'Flaherty and "Where Are You Going? Where Have You Been?" by Joyce Carol Oates. The first story was about a sniper in Ireland during a military conflict. The second story was loosely based on true events about a young girl who was stalked and taken from her home. Both stories packed punches and surprises that the students loved.

After the short story unit, the class prepared for the free SUNY college application weeks by updating their resumes for college and scholarship applications as well as creating job applications. In addition, students had the choice to write a personal statement for job applications that they might use when looking for a job after high school or they could write an experience essay they could use for college applications. In October, the class began Mitch Albom's best seller "Tuesdays with Morrie." It is ironically a book that follows Morrie Schwartz through his trials with ALS, a debilitating and deadly disease. Although the book is sad and it sounds depressing, students find it life-affirming in that the book is full of lessons about living a good life. Dom Cruz said, "I learned how important it is to appreciate all parts of our lives." If you have never read it, put it on your To Read List now. It will be worth it!

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, English Teacher

ENGLISH: LEARNING A LANGUAGE YOU ALREADY SPEAK

Another school year has begun, and students are starting their English classes again, some with a new teacher, and some with their teacher from last year.

Sophomores in Ms. Turner's class are reading "A Long Way Gone", by Ishmael Beah. It is a memoir of a former child soldier in the Sierra Leonean civil war. It is a topic some of them find interesting. "The most interesting thing I am learning about in English right now would have to be the Civil War of Sierra Leone," said **Brodie Coleman** ('26).

Seniors this year in College English are learning to write business letters, resumes, and college applications essays with Mrs. Waffle to help prepare them for their college application process. "Right now in College English we are writing College Application Essays which is helping everyone to prepare for their application process," **Yana King** ('24) commented.

English is still a tough subject for some and it can be a lot of work for students. According to **Hailey Canfield** ('26), "English class is difficult at times, but every class has tough topics. We haven't proceeded with anything too complicated yet."

—Mason Linton, Junior

NOTES FROM THE PK



Our PreK students learned about the American Flag and they are learning the Pledge of Allegiance!



Our PreK students learned about the parts of our bodies the first weeks of school.

YEARBOOK

Although the cost has gone up slightly, it is not too late to purchase a yearbook. Students may also purchase personalization until mid-January.

Contact Mrs. Waffle at jwaffle@morriscsd.org if you are interested in purchasing a book.

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, Yearbook Advisor

ALUMNI GAME A CLOSE ONE



Between the varsity soccer games on Homecoming Weekend, Morris alumni played their own ten minute game. The players' ages ranged from just graduated to the oldest competitor in his 70s, Moms played with and against their children. Mr. Lynn Joy, a great-grandpa, played with and against his daughter and granddaughters—how cool is that? The game was a fun game. The score was 0-0 for most of the game until a late second half goal by **Lincoln Waffle** ('23), a member of the blue team.

If you would like to play next year, reach out—everyone is always welcome. You don't need an invite—just ask around and someone will be able to help you sign up.



HOMECOMING GAMES AND MORE

“You never know how a horse will pull ‘til you hook him to a heavy load,” said Bear Bryant once. The same is true for Homecoming Activities. Each year, students, family, and staff from Morris Central School all gather at their annual homecoming carnival and dance. This year, the date fell upon Friday, September 15. Dressed head to toe in their white and blue Mustang attire and faces covered in blue and white optimism, the school showed off their inimitable “Mustang spirit” as they rallied in support of their school and athletic teams.

Many students enjoyed themselves by the bonfire, participated in a series of interactive games, and some even partook in the “pieing” of their favorite faculty members. **Madison Moore**, a junior at MCS stated, “Homecoming was a lot of fun. It was really nice just to see everyone having a good time together.”

To end the night with one final “hoo-rah!” students from seventh to twelfth grade joined each other in the school's gymnasium for a homecoming dance. Brimming with pride, a few courageous souls formed a conga line that filled the room with grins and laughter. Student Council President, **Jessica Walling**, crowned **Asa Dugan** as King and **Maddie Coleman** as Queen with **Everett Pondolfino**, **Reed Wolfe**, and **Maiya King** as the Court. Although the night had ended, the festivities weren't yet over for the Mustangs. . .

The following morning on Saturday, September 16, the varsity boys, girls, and modified soccer teams each competed against teams from Unatego and Charlotte Valley. The modified team crushed their competition with a winning score of 4 to 1 .

The varsity girls were also triumphant with a score of 5 to 1. **Maya King**, a senior on the girls team contributed to her team's victory with an intense goal scored in the second half. Her input on the experience was one of happiness and nostalgia: “It was my last homecoming as a high schooler at Morris. I enjoyed being able to play as a team that communicated well and passed the ball. It was a lot of fun to win my last homecoming game here at Morris.”

Parents, teachers, and students watched from the sidelines with encouragement and enthusiasm for their student athletes. During a brief hiatus before the boys varsity game, MCS rewarded and recognized its senior athletes, each of whom posed for a picture with their families to document their last homecoming as a Morris Central School student. Concluding MCS' homecoming weekend, and no matter their unfortunate loss, the varsity boys team put up a fight (in spite of missing three starters and dealing with major injuries), they showed off their Mustang stamina and never-give-up attitudes.

—Grace Schiller, Junior

THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Some booed and others roared for the first day of school. Some were excited to see friends and start their educational journeys, as others wished school had never started. **Dominique Cruz** ('24) said, "I was excited to be able to see my friends again and maybe make new friends." Personally, I was not excited for the first day of school as it messed up my sleep schedule I had over summer. Transitioning from waking up late for my job everyday, to driving to school early in the morning was a difficult change. But for others, like **Tatiana McAdams** ('24), the first day of school meant looking forward to "Graduation and senior recognition events with sports among other things."

Others were not so keen on starting the first day of school. **Hailey Canfield** ('26) said, "I was worried about making a fool out of myself somehow or classes being difficult." This was very relatable to many people, I'm sure. The first day of school can be very nerve-racking for everyone, but luckily we all survived the first day, the first weeks, the first months with great success.

—*Ethan Herring*, Senior

SPIRIT WEEK

Students showed off their Mustang pride by participating in this year's Spirit Week. Students dressed based on the Theme of the Day. On Monday everyone brought out their best neon clothing for school. Then on Tuesday people dressed up as their favorite Character, **Brodie Coleman** ('26) said, "Dress Up as Your Favorite Character Day was the best Spirit Week activity by far." Once Wednesday came around, it was time for Biker vs. Surfer Day. **Ella Moore** ('27) enjoyed that day because "It was a chance to dress how I would not normally dress." On Thursday, everyone was able to go to school dressed in pajamas because it was Pajama Day. **Rachel Hill** ('24) said, "Pajama Day was my favorite day because I had a chance to dress comfortably."

Friday was the last day of Spirit Week and everyone went crazy with the blue and white. **Ali Farmer** ('26) thought that "Blue and White Day was the best. It's easy and doesn't take extra planning, and most people don't feel the need to go out and buy something they're never going to wear again." Blue and White Day was the perfect time to show school spirit too. **William King** ('24) said, "I liked Blue and White Day because I could see all the spirit in our school." **Robert Hill** ('26) agreed, "Blue and White Day was fun because I liked to see everyone dress with spirit."

—*Noah Moore*, Senior

MUSTANG PEP RALLY SPIRIT

The 2023 Homecoming Pep Rally was a big success! Many of the students were able to be involved in many of the fun games Mr. Iannelli and the senior class prepared for students. There were many traditional games such as Tug-o'-War but new ones, such as Draw the Mustang and Musical Chairs, were introduced. This definitely had everyone excited for the homecoming soccer games the following day. **Ryland Boss** ('26) said, "Running out with my team made me feel more excited for the game on Saturday."

During Tug-o-War there was a senior vs. faculty match. Mrs. Perkosky said, "I was very relieved we beat the seniors to keep our faculty and staff winning streak going." While the seniors lost to the faculty members once again, hopefully the Class of 2025 can beat them next year.

One of Mrs. Waffle's favorite parts of the Pep Rally was the "'Running of the Flags' by **Everett Pondolfino**, **James Fish**, and **Dom Cruz**. They ran the Mustang Flags up and down the gym and hyped us all up." Other favorite activities were the frozen t-shirt challenge and musical chairs. Both activities were super funny.

The Pep Rally is always a great way to get the younger kids involved in celebrating school spirit. The carnival the Booster Club puts on is also exciting for the students as well. This year instead of the dunk tank, there was a pie-in-the-face contest. Many of the faculty members participated in this as well. Mr. Wais, one of the good sports who had pies thrown at him, said, "It was a great fundraiser idea and it was great to see so many of the kids having fun." Overall, this year was a success for the students and faculty.

—*Rachel Hill*, Senior



Homecoming Carnival





Homecoming Dance & Pep Rally



SOPHOMORE NEWS

The sophomores were busy with their first fundraiser of the year in early September: Mums! Thanks goes out to the whole community for supporting them by purchasing mums. We sold over 325 beautiful mums.

Keep an eye out for our future fundraisers: January we will sell carnations for Valentine's Day and in May, we will sell ice cream and have a bake sale/car wash/can drive.

A special congratulations goes out to the class' new officers: **Brodie Coleman**, President; **Robert Hill**, Vice President; **Ali Farmer**, Secretary; **Carter Swayer**, Treasurer; and Representatives for Student Council, **Evelyn Burke**, **Robert Hill**, **Brodie Coleman**, and **Ali Farmer**

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, Sophomore Class Advisor



THE ODYSSEY TRIP OF '23

The Adirondacks 2023: The waves were pounding on the canoe that we were paddling so hard. The rope was the only thing keeping us somewhat together. This was one thing I had to endure while part of the Clark Foundation Odyssey trip this summer. This was my first experience on a remote adventure.

The trip had two groups. I was in group two. I left home around 8:00 a.m. on July 22. The trip lasted a week. On the first day we met and got to know each other a little. Then we got to packing our bags. The Odyssey Leaders taught us how to pack them with everything we needed for the trip while having a ton of room.

We stopped just outside the town of Cooperstown. It was the "official first day" of the trip. We spent the night there and when we got up in the morning, we loaded our boats and drove to the Adirondacks. Once there, we untied the canoes and took out our bags from the trailer. Then we finally embarked on the journey. We started canoeing, and it was a little difficult because my partner and I didn't really have enough knowledge on canoeing. After a couple of hours our Group Leaders and Navigators decided to stop for the day because the sun started to set. We ended up finding camp and setting up. That was a big test because it was the first day and we were just learning. But we got through it!

The second, third, and fourth days were a little challenging because we had to adapt to new people and the many challenges. We finally got a lot better as a team and started taking on a lot at a time because we trusted each other a lot more and became more responsible as a team. During the last couple of days, we had A LOT more challenges, such as changing seats in the canoes while on the water and trusting people to hold our boats so we didn't fall in. It took a toll on us as a team, but we pushed through it.

When the last day rolled around there were a lot of emotions. Some people were happy they got to see their families again. But some were sad because our leaders, Jimmy and E-Kat, were our family. It was an amazing experience, and I enjoyed it and learned so much. I learned how to trust myself better, I learned bravery, and I learned leadership and some mastery over my impatience. I hope middle schoolers after me choose to apply for Odyssey as well.

—Kiarra Walker, Freshman

OUTWARD BOUND



Here at Morris Central School, there is a scholarship offered to a select group of ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students every year by the Clark Foundation. This scholarship pays students' ways into one of the most challenging, yet most life-changing experiences of their lives, Outward Bound.

Interviews are held each year by the Clark Foundation, asking questions pertaining to our values and capabilities. Outward Bound is a course that lasts fifteen days in the wilderness, where students experience canoeing, climbing, and backpacking until they reach their final destinations. This past summer, four well-deserving students were selected for this program: **Tatiana McAdams** ('24), **Yana King** ('24), **Lorissa Johnston** ('24), and **Zandra Aliya** ('26). Over the course of fifteen days, these strong, young women were able to travel 73 miles through the Adirondack Mountains in Maine. **Tatiana McAdams** ('24) and **Zandra Aliya** ('26) traveled together in a group of ten students while **Yana King** ('24) and **Lorissa Johnston** ('24) traveled in a different group of ten students. Each group traveled a different route, but ended up at the same destination.

This experience is an incredible opportunity for any ninth-eleventh graders who are interested in going on a life-changing adventure. **Tatiana McAdams** ('24) shared her takeaways from her experience: "Outward Bound was one of the most incredible experiences in my life. The trip was the longest I had ever been without my family, but that didn't stop me from enjoying the trip thoroughly. I am extremely grateful that I was accepted for this wonderful opportunity." **Lorissa Johnston** ('24) also shared how her trip went: "It was a great experience! Things got tough, but there was always someone to talk to about it and get through it with.

When I was tired and homesick, I knew that in the end it was going to be worth it, and I liked eating peanut butter and jelly almost every day. I became close with people I never usually talk to. Also, going swimming, hiking, and canoeing was very interesting. Hiking four to fifteen miles a day while running out of water wasn't so fun, but going to bed with warm food was the best part, even though it downpoured on us while carrying canoes. Sleeping in the rain—I thought I'd never have to do that, but to this day I think about it. It was worth it, and I would definitely do it again."

The community and life lessons that come with this excursion are definitely worth the challenge. Any aspiring ninth-eleventh graders still have the opportunity to apply for the Clark Outward Bound Scholarship for this summer.

—Yana King, Senior



TRI-VALLEY LADY SOCCER CHAMPIONS

Congratulations to the Lady Mustangs and Lady Panthers for their win in the Tri-Valley League Championship game on October 14 played at the Wright National Soccer Campus. The ladies played a close match against Milford and were tied nil-nil well into the second half until tragedy struck for the Milford Wildcats as their keeper slipped and dropped the ball after a scramble and a great save. The ball bounced backwards into the net, making the score 1-0, Edmeston-Morris (E-M). The Lady Mustang-Panthers had many chances throughout the game, dominating 50-50 balls and keeping it in Milford's defensive half most of the time.

Solid defense from senior **Jessica Walling** and her teammates and goalkeeper kept the ball out of danger for E-M. There were several great scoring chances by senior **Maiya King** and other E-M midfielders and forwards throughout the game. With less than fifteen minutes remaining in the game, **Hannah Wist** ('25) sent a rocket from well outside the 18 to pocket the ball into the upper right corner of Milford's goal, making the score 2-0. E-M ladies took home the Tri-Valley League banner for the second year in a row.



Congratulations



Modified Soccer



Boys' and Girls' Varsity Soccer



Cross-Country



THREE CHEERS TO . . .

- Booster Club and Student Council for an awesome Homecoming carnival
- Mrs. Smith & Mrs. Vunk for stepping in and making the year start off on the right foot!
- Mrs. Smith for coming out of retirement again to help MCS out. Thank you so much!
- All the mentors for being available to guide and help our new faculty.
- Mrs. Bolton and her class for their delicious snack cart and completing tedious work orders quickly with a smile on their faces!
- Mrs. Mackey for having such engaging library classes that students are excited to go!
- All the teachers willing to accept Methods students and student teachers from SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick. That is good teachers putting their know-how to the best work for the next generation of teachers.
- All of our students—Mr. Jack Cole, our school photographer, said that our students were some of the best he has worked with all year. Our students were polite, friendly, and cooperative. Mr. Cook, Director of the Clark Foundation Scholarship Office, shared similar praise.
- Mrs. Dysenroth and Mrs. Lewis for taking time out of their mornings to warmly welcome students as they enter the building each day.
- Mrs. Zeh for helping a colleague out.
- The Girls' Varsity Soccer team for making it to the Tri-Valley League Play Off Game on October 14, 2023.
- Congrats to the new Editor-in-Chief of the Yearbook, **Tatiana McAdams**. In addition, Congrats to **Noah Moore** for being voted Business Manager. Both jobs are HUGE responsibilities.
- Ms. Matson for her substitute scheduling wizardry and to all of the substitutes who are wearing multiple hats during this time of substitute teacher shortage.
- All our new faculty and staff—Welcome!
- Mr. Tol responded quickly to reports of water flowing behind the walls one evening in October. His fast action allowed us to keep the school open and avoid costly damage due to flooding. Thank you to Mr. Matson as well for identifying that it was time to bring in help!
- Yay for the return of Morning Program!