

The Warrior Chronicles

New Egypt High School



Photo Credit: Mrs. Occhiuzzo

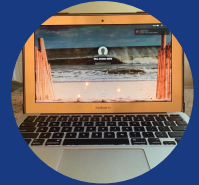
Mrs. Stathius: Battles Cancer Like a True Warrior

By Sydney Orndorff

Well known within the Plumsted Township School District is Mrs. Stathius. Her noteworthy ability to engage students within various aspects of academics makes her stand out as an educator. During her 15 years spent teaching in the middle school, she made quite the impact. Beginning her teaching career at NEMS with science while also teaching preschoolers, she made her way to running the entire STEM lab. She held a crucial role in transforming the STEM program in New Egypt, as she incorporated her love of science with coding, building, and teamwork.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Stathius was diagnosed with Glioblastoma last March. Essentially, Glioblastoma is a form of brain cancer that is especially challenging for the body to manage. As an attempt to comprehend the struggle it must be coping with this, her great friend and past coworker, Mrs. Occhiuzzo gave great insight on the matter.

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Occhiuzzo explained, "Tremendously strong and a true scientist at heart, she has been giving it her all. From proton radiation therapy, to being injected with a medical form of the polio virus, she moved onto her third trial last month, where she was pretty much the only candidate under these medical conditions." Her battle with Glioblastoma is truly inspirational, considering the great lengths she has gone to in order to defeat this disease. This battle would not be possible without her husband Joe, helping to guide her through these tough times.

On a happier note, her science career has not ended in the slightest! Mrs. Occhiuzzo shared,

"She hopes to provide as much information as possible to the University of Penn to help find a cure. She has been working with them on the various trials as well as providing daily scientific data to them to help track her Glioblastoma." Her great passion for science has not faded, as she continues to use her experiences to aid the scientific world. Not only is she first hand helping with this research, she is encouraging others to do the same. As she has participated in numerous fundraisers, she motivates all people to donate to cancer research, or even become more aware about it.

Everyone in the New Egypt Community wants Mrs. Stathius to be aware of the difference she has made in our district. As for myself, I remember trying to wrap my brain around coding during Engineering class, with her by my side. Along with this, we built all different sorts of prototypes, acting as design engineers.

She made every activity we did enjoyable. Another past student of hers, Alex Pavljuk, explained to me what makes Mrs. Stathius so great and why so many students are still enamored by her,

"She is someone that makes you feel understood. She just gets how student's think, she just has this gift to be able to pull things out of her students that they didn't know was theirs," Alex then added, "In 7th and 8th grade when I clearly wasn't cut out for coding she recognized my love and intrigue of Apple products, so she busted out the old Power Mac G4 that sat in the back of the room collecting dust and began to show me the ins and outs of it and how to get directly to the hardware of it. She then transitioned the class from me working so heavily on coding that I had no love for and turned it into a research project that I spent the whole year with her on fixing it up and eventually getting back online. She is so special to everyone who ever had her in class."

Mrs. Stathius, thank you so much from the New Egypt family for everything you have accomplished in our district, and what you continue to accomplish. We wish the best of luck with your journey with Glioblastoma and believe in you!



Photo Credit: Mrs. Occhiuzzo



Photo Credit: Mrs. Occhiuzzo

Pandemic Warrior, Connie Gross, Battles COVID-19 One Stitch at a Time

By Abby Whetzel

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have become aware that we are in desperate need of unity and masks across the country. While we are a small town, we are best known for our support of one and another during tough times. In our small community of New Egypt, many local heroes have stepped up in hopes to provide a sense of unity and safety in our town. Whether they are doctors, nurses, truckers, grocery-store workers, or law enforcement officials, these individuals are playing an important role in combating this pandemic.

We spoke with Connie Gross, a Registered Nurse in the Emergency Department, working on her days off to make masks for those in need. Connie is working on the front lines of this pandemic and while her hospital still has access to masks, she notes “other facilities and individuals do not have access to supplies. Many people that have immune-suppressed systems need masks [and cannot obtain them].” Connie, at the time of this interview, had made between 100 and 150 masks and was hoping to make more during her spare time, and does not intend to slow down anytime soon. She had originally found the fabric pattern from Youtube, and altered it to help her make them faster.

Connie is not in this fight alone. Many other like-minded people have posted on several media outlets, willing to make spare masks for

those on the front lines. Connie added, “Ellen Smith is cutting fabric squares. Colleen Burkard is also making masks. Others have donated fabric and elastic and money to buy more supplies.”

In fact, these supplies are not easy to come by. Connie notes that the hardest thing to find is “corded elastic, which is more comfortable behind the ear for prolonged use.” These masks, while becoming increasingly difficult to make, and taking up to the 10 minutes to produce, could ultimately save the life of a healthy individual. Connie left our readers with a final request, “Stay home and stay safe. You personally may not be compromised by this virus, but you may be a carrier. Staying home may save someone's loved one.”

On behalf of the Warrior Chronicles, I would like to thank everyone on the front lines of this pandemic, from nurses, doctors, and truck drivers to local heroes just like Connie Gross. No one is alone in this fight, and please continue to stay home and stay safe.



Photo Credit: Connie Gross

Remote Learning Creates Unique Challenges for Students and Teachers Alike

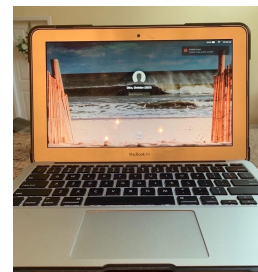
By Christian Olivo

As students across the country continue to learn more every day about the pros and cons of remote learning, I decided to reach out to two of my teachers to see how they have also adapted to this abrupt change in the educational process. From my own standpoint, the teachers of New Egypt High School have made a seamless transition from the start while also making sure students are understanding the information taught, are comfortable, and are staying positive.

History teacher Mrs. Drake made a point in her email which really stood out. “The Warrior Personalized Learning Platform has set students up for success in many ways and has prepared us for the transition to Remote Learning. Adaptability has been necessary but we have always had the tools to be able to do so.” For many classes, the only thing that has really changed is the face-to-face interaction with teachers and students. While the socialization aspect was something that everyone across the United States has had to adapt to, teachers have been able to maintain lines of communication with students. Mr. Drake discussed this point, “Utilizing the tools we have such as our Google Meets, Google Hangouts, and Parent/Student Square have helped make communication as effective as possible during Remote Learning”.

Many students have found the use of these tools effective, “communication between the teachers and myself has been very good because my teachers will reach out to me and are doing their best to make sure my senior year is fulfilled during these tough

times” Senior Chase Sempervive explained. Senior Anthony Surdo added, “Teachers are just as new to virtual learning as we are, and there has not been an instance where I have not been able to reach out and receive help. We should feel very lucky for how our students and staff were prepared for such an unpredictable scenario.”



When asked about communication with the parents of students, history teacher Mr. Feddema stated, “communication with parents is critical during this process. The entirety of New Egypt's community has really come together to make this experience as seamless of a transition as possible during this difficult time.”

COVID-19 will be seen as a historical event by future generations, and some teachers have taken this as an opportunity to incorporate news about the virus into their lessons. “Some of my students are actually making their art piece for their project about COVID-19, my project not only explains the effect of war on soldiers but how art can also be used as a therapeutic experience during a traumatic experience and how art can reflect society during a certain time period. I find it almost fitting that this art project came during this difficult time because drawing/creating art can be a distraction from the difficult times we face as a nation, much like the concept my project explores, but also students are reflecting society at the moment through their art,” Mr. Feddema explained.

Overall, I believe English teacher Mr. Palumbo said it best, “This is new territory for everyone. Come together as a community and family, understanding that we will all come through this stronger.”



Blue Angels and Thunderbirds Sent Out Over NY/NJ to Raise Spirits During Pandemic

By Abby Whetzel

Info Credit: U.S. Department of Defense

Tuesday April 28th, the Navy's Blue Angels and the Air Force's Thunderbirds flew over several areas throughout New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania to honor healthcare workers on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic. The flight began at noon in New York City and continued through all five boroughs, the New York Suburbs and Newark, New Jersey before their arrival at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. About an hour later the formation flew over Levittown and Trenton before turning South and making its final trip through Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Wilmington, Delaware.

New Egypt residents had a stunning view of the flyover due to our close proximity to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. Today's shows have been in the works for over a month now in order to give a formal salute to healthcare workers, first responders and other essential workers. The Navy and Air Force worked in part with local government to ensure spectators maintained social distancing and other current practices during each of the shows.

While the show's initial purpose was aimed at honoring healthcare workers and those on the frontlines, it also fulfilled necessary flight requirements for both teams. Due to the global pandemic, many of the teams' shows have been

cancelled or postponed, and the flyover gave them an opportunity to unite the nation while satisfying their training requirements.

Following today's riveting show of unity, it is rumored that both the Thunderbirds and the Blue Angels will fly over other major cities including Baltimore, Atlanta, Houston and Austin, Texas in the next few weeks, however a definite flight path has yet to be released. "In order to reach the maximum number of Americans, some portions of America Strong will feature only the Blue Angels or the Thunderbirds, while others will include both teams flying in their signature Delta formations simultaneously," the Air Force said in a statement.

The initiative has been referred to as, "America Strong" and focuses around spreading a message of national unity and gratitude to all those being affected by the current pandemic. In a joint announcement from the United States Navy and Air Force they reported, "America Strong is a collaborative salute from the Navy and Air Force to recognize healthcare workers, first responders, and other essential personnel while standing in solidarity with all Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic."



Photo Credit: Ryan Mack Photo

Alone Time: Films About Isolation To Watch in Isolation

By Kevin Stone

Quarantine has put us all in a sort of isolation from the outside world, so this couldn't be a better time to watch or even rewatch some classic films. The following films are all about the protagonist separated from society and forced on a path to find a solution. These aren't meant to bring anyone down but are fitting movies for a fitting time. Also, they are just really good films.

First is the classic *Castaway*. Tom Hanks plays Chuck Noland, a FedEx executive tasked with flying to Malaysia when his flight takes a dive into the Pacific Ocean making him the only survivor on a desolate island. Tom Hanks' acting alone sells this movie and no other story could make both the audience and character emotionally attached to a volleyball.

Next is *Gravity* (2013), a science fiction drama featuring Sandra Bullock who plays Dr. Ryan Stone on her first shuttle mission. After debris strikes during a routine mission, she's left stuck out in space. A similar plot to *Castaway* but in a very different setting, perfect for any sci-fi lovers. The stunning visuals along with the fantastic music score are worth it alone, which also earned the film an Academy Award for Best Original Music Score and Best Visual Effect and Cinematography. This film can be very dark at times and might make you fear space like *Castaway* might make someone fear open waters, but it's all needed to really illustrate

how alone Sandra Bullock's character is, which is done beautifully.

Back to Earth, *I Am Legend* takes Will Smith's character Robert Neville on a journey across a ruined and eerily vacant New York City filled with what are practically zombies. The only friend accompanying him is his German Shepherd. Will Smith doesn't completely sell the role and the film does feel a bit dated but the story keeps audiences caring about his lonesome journey making it a decent pick for capturing isolation.

Thrusting back into space and over 100 million miles away is Mars, the setting of one of the more recent popular isolation films, *The Martian*. The film features Matt Damon as astronaut Mark Watney who is thought to be dead after a sand storm swept the surface leaving him injured but also stranded as his crew left him to get safety. You can spot the similarities between both *Castaway* and *Gravity* but the highlight here is how the film adds lighthearted moments in a story that should be very dark but doesn't lose any emotional value from cracking a few jokes.



Photo Credit: Wilson Sporting Goods and Amazon

Timmy Cheung Wins Ocean County Soil Conservation District Poster

By Grace Dreher

NEHS Junior Timmy Cheung was recently named the winner of the annual Ocean County Soil Conservation District Poster Contest. This year's theme for the poster contest was "Where would we be without pollinators?" As described by the Ocean County Soil Conservation District, the poster contest is, "an annual contest sponsored by the NJ Department of Agriculture, the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts and your local Soil District. The contest aims to promote a better understanding of the connection between natural resources and humans, in a fun and creative way that engages students throughout the county, state and nation."

The contest is open to all students in New Jersey from grades 2-12. One winner per grade level is declared in each county, and their entry is subsequently submitted to the NJ statewide competition. "I was first introduced to this contest as a member of the Environmental Club during my Sophomore year by Ms. Fox and Mrs. Baumiller," Cheung commented, "this year, I created a poster that reflects the importance of not only bees, but all pollinators to our Earth."

As a result of his hard work on the poster, Cheung won not only in the grades 10-12 age group but was also named Grand Champion of the Ocean County Annual Poster Contest.

Regarding his win, Cheung added, "I felt very grateful and joyful that I won as I hope this informs everyone of the importance of pollinators and their role in our lives. Lastly, this can be a reminder to take care of our beautiful Earth as we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Earth Day!"



Photo Credit: Timmy Cheung

STARSET: Blending Music with Narrative

By Kevin Stone

Pic Credits: Kevin Stone

Music can be used to spread a message, share thoughts and feelings, or played to unwind and have a good time. Music compliments movies and serves as a backdrop to add more depth to a scene, but what if the music was the main event and the story was the filling? Energetic rock band Starset has mastered this reversal over their three albums, live performances, and even a book.

Lead singer Dustin Bates has always been intrigued by science, having a Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering, having enrolled and even taught at the International Space University. After working on music in the background from his other band Downplay, he got a record deal and decided to drop his Ph.D studies. This extensive background led him into creating a little-known science fiction band we now know as Starset.

On the surface, the music is very digestible and written similarly to other punk and pop songs, but the real defining factor is the story intertwined in the music videos, concerts, and the book. Most of the narrative is kept out of sight which splits the audience. If you just want to listen to the music, you can do that. If you want to go a step further, then you can go down the rabbit hole and uncover a deeper story. The novel 'The Prox Transmissions' tells the story of an astronomer receiving a cryptic message and it tells of what he should do with this information. In the pages, the band Starset is



formed to spread the message to the public through music, which ties into the live

performances named 'Demonstrations.' With every new album comes a tour and with every tour comes a new chapter for the story. To fully uncover it all; reading the book, watching the music videos, and going to a concert is truly the best experience if you love stories.

An extremely popular band to do this is Twenty One Pilots. They too have a similar idea of a narrative behind the scenes, but more cryptic. Their music videos, songs, and even their album covers, are filled with small details tying a narrative together, but unlike Starset, which requires a bit more effort to unveil. The inclusion of a fictional narrative from a band is certainly interesting, but also captivating. As a listener it can feel so much more connecting as you develop a love for them, not only as a band but also characters as you would in a film. Music is constantly evolving and while everyone has their go-to artists, genres and albums, it never hurts to branch out and you can't predict what you'll find.

