



# Westside Wire



## Students Honor Veterans at Lancaster Cemetery

Westside students lead the way in honoring our veterans. The Joe Walker Civil Air Patrol is often recognized for the outstanding work they do throughout the community. Led by advisor Traci Scott, the cadets have been welcomed back to numerous events in the Antelope Valley to present the colors and speak on the endless volunteer work they do.

This Veteran's Day, the cadets were invited to present the colors at the Lancaster Cemetery event for the third year in a row. The cadets are often found around the AV dedicating time and hard work to honor our nation's heroes and helping out our community.

On December 13th, the cadets once again represented the community at Wreaths Across America in Lancaster. In this national ode to fallen heroes, the cadets helped place wreaths on over 800 headstones paid for through donations from our community. Hillview, Valley View, Anaverde Hills and Joe Walker schools all participated in gathering donations for wreaths as well as partnering with local veterans to gain support and awareness for the cause. Thank you to the Civil Air Patrol cadets who continue to honor the lives of past, present and future heroes that have served our nation.

December

2014

Serving nearly 9,000 students spread across 346 square miles, Westside Union School District prides itself on being "the district of choice" with more choice-based programs than any other district in the Antelope Valley. Westside Union School District features 12 schools, providing world-class education to students from kindergarten to 8th grade. Continuing a tradition of high academic achievement, a majority of Westside Union School District schools exceed the coveted 800 score on the Academic Performance Index administered by the California Department of Education.

## Gwendolyn Farrell Named 2014 Athena Award Recipient

The prestigious recognition as the 2014 Athena Award recipient was most recently awarded to Westside's Board Trustee Gwendolyn Farrell.

On November 21st at the John P. Eliopoulos Hellenic Center in Lancaster, seven women were celebrated for their personal and professional achievements in the community. Farrell was one of two Westside honorees, along with Traci Scott, leader of the Joe Walker Civil Air Patrol cadets, to be recognized.

The Athena Award is presented by the Zonta Club of the Antelope Valley and is presented to those who embody the highest level of professional excellence, devote time and energy to improve the quality of life for others in the community and actively assist women in realizing their leadership potential.

Congratulations Gwendolyn!



## Westside Power Couple Featured in AV Press



Following a big year for Joe Walker VEX Robotics and a special win as Westside's Teacher of the Year, Matt and Elizabeth Anderson have now been recognized as one of our District's power couples!

The AV Press featured an interview on December 7th in a story written about the pair highlighting their work as "fantastic role models for work ethic, service and community, and other educators."

With a combined 56 years' experience in teaching, we look forward to what this awesome pair have planned next.

We are proud to have the Andersons on our team and congratulate them both on another successful year as part of the Joe Walker family!

### Contact Westside

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# A Message From The Superintendent

Dear Westside Families,

As we end the 1st semester of the 2014-15 school year, I am hopeful that your child has enjoyed the classroom learning. As we have implemented the Common Core State Standards, we are all learning new ways to engage our learners as we bring a new level of rigor to their classroom instruction. No doubt you have also noticed the increased use of technology by our students as well with many of our students using portable laptop, iPad or Google Chrome labs. Our computer labs have been updated and our overall infrastructure has been improved to allow increased access to the Internet.

I am hopeful that you are enjoying winter break! Remember that our schools are closed from December 20 through January 4 with school resuming on January 5, 2015. Services will be limited throughout the break, so if you need to do business with the central office, please be sure to call first and make an appointment.

Throughout the past few weeks we have attended many concerts and performances at our schools. Our students are so impressive with their many talents, and you cannot help but smile as you watch them giving their all. I am hopeful that many of you got the opportunity to see your children's school performances as well. They were indeed priceless.

Many of you are aware that Mr. Lots, our Esperanza Principal, will be taking a new job in the Castaic Union School District beginning in January. He has worked in Westside Union School District since he began as a substitute teacher in the 90's. However, his new job is both a career move and gets him closer to his home and spending more time with his children, and we all wish him the best of luck in his new endeavor.

As we enter the holiday season, I hope that you will have time to enjoy it with your family and friends, treasuring each moment that you get to spend together. The New Year is also a time for reflection, and a time to teach our children about setting goals to be accomplished during the coming year. However you spend your holiday, we will look forward to the safe and rested return of your children on January 5th.

Happy Holidays to all of you, and thank you for your support of your children and their academic growth all year. We are pleased to partner with you to help your children be successful learners.

Thanks again for your continuing support of our work with your children.

Sincerely,

*Regina Rossall*

Westside Union School District Superintendent

# Westside Roundup

## Rancho Vista

Rancho Vista is embracing this chilly holiday season with exciting learning and philanthropic activities. We are engaged in an effort to make the holiday season brighter for some local families in need. We are conducting a food drive with the hope of not letting any family in the AV go hungry. We want our students to be great learners and caring members of their community. Rancho Vista School wishes all a happy, peaceful and fun holiday season.

-Tom Morreale, Principal

## Del Sur

At Del Sur we have been busy making a difference in our community. Our True Leaders recently went to Mayflower Gardens to carol for their residents and brought them fuzzy socks and scarves collected on campus. Our students have been working hard creating projects and utilizing the technology we have been given. It is exciting to see what our students have created. We are working hard to have a school garden as well as new display cases put up on campus to share our amazing student work.

-Nicole Hernandez, Principal

## Gregg Anderson

Aloha Gregg Anderson families! Students did a fantastic job this holiday season with great shows and performances at every grade level! Thank you to students and parents for helping keep our campus safe and secure all year long. We also hope you enjoyed parents night out! Thank you for your support of GAA. Aviators Away!

-Shelly Dearing, Principal

## Quartz Hill

Quartz Hill has had busy December! Numerous students participated in a Talent Show on Dec. 10. Second grade visited our local fire station on Dec. 12. 5th grade went to the California Science Center on Dec. 16. 6th grade will be honoring students who have good citizenship with a field trip to Brunswick Lanes. PTA also planned a Santa Store for our students to go shopping for their families.

-Cathy Bennett, Principal

## Leona Valley

Leona Valley School is busy this time of year with piloting the new Math Program, working with Student Council and continuing with our Ballroom class. The spirit and kindness filled the holidays with "I am thankful" Thanksgiving grams, and a food & toiletry drive. Student Council is sponsoring a drive helping families in Mexico. We ended the season with a festive program singing and dancing to Christmas songs.

-Sandra Jones, Principal

## Cottonwood

I would first like to take time to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Feliz Navidad, Happy Kwanza, and Happy Hanukkah. We are excited to open up our 2nd Computer Lab on campus which will give our students even more access to technology. As we look to bring in the end of 2014 to a close and open up the new year of 2015, let's remember what makes Westside Union School District the place to be....We are Safe, Prepared, Respectful, and Responsible.

-James Norris, Principal

## Hillview

Hillview recently celebrated the end of the first semester with numerous activities. The band's Winter Concert, Drama Club's play "The Boys are Back," Department Awards, ASB 100 Merit field trip to Cinemark Theatres & DTASC performance of "School Night Live." We also celebrated the success of two new elective classes, Introduction to Spanish and Model United Nations. We would also like to thank Gus and Rhonda Camacho for their generous \$1,000 donation to our band. We appreciate their ongoing support of our students.

-Rob Garza, Principal

## Valley View

We are off to a great start at Valley View. Already this year we have awarded many students with Perfect Attendance dog tags for the first month of school! We want to thank the City of Lancaster for the fabulous sidewalks that were installed in our neighborhood! They have really helped increase safety for our students who walk or ride their bike to school.

-Scott Brewer, Principal

## Joe Walker

In November, we hosted the annual FIRST LEGO League AV Techno Classic with 24 teams from all over AV and greater LA County, demonstrating problem-solving skills, creative thinking, teamwork, competitive play, sportsmanship, and sense of community. Joe Walker Civil Air Patrol cadets organized a school-wide fundraising campaign to support the Wreaths Across America Organization as they provided wreaths for each Veterans' gravesite at Lancaster Cemetery. Students, staff, and parents donated over \$1,200 to this amazing cause! Go JETS!!!

-Steve Wood, Principal

## Anaverde Hills

Anaverde Hills is excited to announce some upcoming events! The first basketball games in the new gym will be on January 14 for Girls Basketball and January 15 for the boys team. Kindergarten through 5th grade awards assemblies will be during the school day on January 21 and 6th through 8th grade awards in the evening at 6:00 on January 22. On January 27, we will take a field trip to see Grease at LPAC!

-Kristin Gellinck-Frye, Principal

## Esperanza

Esperanza wants to wish everyone Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. It is hard to believe that the year is half over. Thanks to everyone that supported the holiday programs and our PTA activities. We want to especially thank everyone who volunteered to run these great events! We also want to say "Great Job" to all of our students who made academic honors for 1st semester. Have a great holiday break and we will see you in 2015.

-Rodney Lots, Principal

## Westside Academy

Westside Academy is celebrating! One of our students was accepted into the Chamber of Commerce's Young Entrepreneurs Academy! This award winning program is selectively offered throughout the state. Seats are extremely limited and very competitive. Our student competed with applicants from all over the AV for a very small number of seats. Acceptance is based on a student's application, which includes an essay outlining the student's goals for the future and an oral interview. To say we are excited for him is an understatement!

-Deborah Rutkowski-Hines, Principal

A message from  
your Westside  
principals!