

May 22, 2024: Members of VFW Post 5744 were invited to the “Third Grade Patriotic Concert” at South Berwick’s Central School. The concert was in remembrance of those who died in service to our country, and to honor community veterans who served. The program was hosted by Ms. Kate Smith, Music Teacher. Post Senior Vice Commander Barry Kray, Past Post Commander Ernie Wood, and Post Historian Mike St. Pierre were there for the 1400 concert (there was also an 1800 concert).



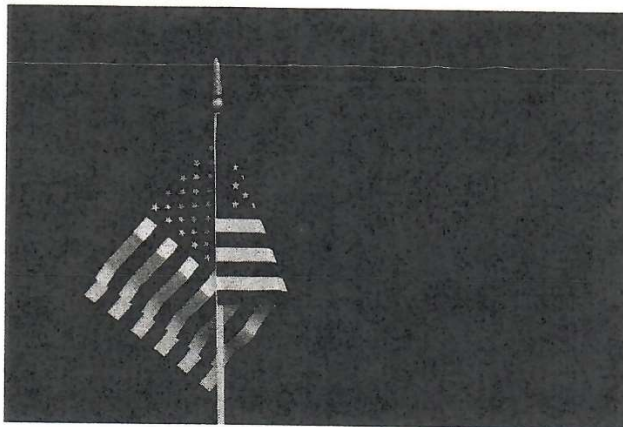
Music Teacher Kate Smith with the Third Grade Choir in the background and attending students and teachers in the foreground.

Past Post 5744 Commander Ernie Woods applauds one of the performances.



Veterans in attendance were called to the front as the audience applauded and waved hand-held U.S. Flags. Each veteran was then handed student-made cards noting “Thank You for your service”.

**Central School Proudly Presents:
Third Grade Patriotic Concert
May 22th, 2024**



Welcome to Central School's third grade patriotic concert. Today we remember those who died in service to our country. Our freedom and rights came at a price. How can we show our appreciation for those who made the ultimate sacrifice? Here at Central School, we believe the best way to remember our fallen soldiers is with respect, appreciation and gratitude.

Star-Spangled Banner

arr. by Paul Jennings

In the War of 1812, our nation was fighting to keep our independence from England. Morale was low. Americans were tired of fighting and wanted to move on as an independent nation. On September 13th, 1814 a man named Francis Scott Key watched an important battle at Fort McHenry. He was so relieved to see the American flag still flying that he wrote a poem about it. Francis Scott Key put his poem to music, using a well-known British tune. His poem, now a song, was an instant hit. The Star-Spangled Banner became our national anthem in 1931 when Congress passed a bill and president Herbert Hoover signed it into law. As we begin our patriotic concert, we ask you to please remove your hats and stand for our national anthem.

Armed Forces Medley

arr. by Paul & Ralph Colwell

Our next song is the Armed Forces Medley. While today's program is meant to remember our fallen soldiers, we want to take a moment to honor all who have risked their lives in service to our country. The Armed Forces consist of six service branches and is one of the largest military forces in the world. The six service branches are the army, marine corps, navy, air force, coast guard and space force. We invite members of the armed forces to stand when they hear their anthem so we may recognize you.

PROGRAM - FRONT

Our Heroes Will Live On

Teresa Jennings

In fields and cities, towns and seas,
The ones who faced our foes,
Who gave their best, their most, their all,
With valor midst their woes.
So cherished for their bravest deeds
Upon their courage drawn.
Through tender hearts and memories,
Our heroes will live on.

We honor them with all we have, their sacrifice felt deep.
The light of freedom shines this day for all of us to keep.
When dearest loved ones we recall,
Our tears are never gone.
O, rest in peace remembering
Our heroes will live on.

This next song is sung in honor of our fallen soldiers.

Stars and Stripes Forever

Arr. Paul Jennings

Our next song is Stars and Stripes Forever. This song is set to a march written by John Phillip Sousa in 1897. Once it was released, Stars and Stripes Forever reached #1 in the musical charts. It was revived during the Great War, now known as World War 1, and became the song that helped inspire millions to fight the war to end all wars. In 1987, Stars and Stripes Forever was declared the official national march of the United States of America. The lyrics you will hear today were added to the march by composer Paul Jennings in 1993. Please enjoy Stars and Stripes Forever.

Thankful For the USA

Teresa Jennings

The USA is a powerful and awe-inspiring country because of the men and women who work tirelessly to protect our freedoms and democracy since the United States' rise to independence in 1776. We once again show our gratitude, appreciation and respect for our fallen soldiers and all those who continue to serve. Please enjoy "Thankful for the USA".

Many thanks to everyone who helped make this concert possible. We are grateful for the opportunity to honor our fallen soldiers. Thank you for coming to our patriotic concert. Have a wonderful night!

PROGRAM - BACK

November 1, 2024: Members of VFW Post 5744, along with other veterans, active-duty military, first responders, and guests, at the invitation of school and program administrators, attended Marshwood Middle School's twenty-fourth annual assembly "In Honor of Our Veterans"



The first thing one notices when entering the school are the permanent displays honoring veterans.

Before the start of the assembly honored veterans, active-duty military, and first responders lined the halls from the cafeteria



to the gymnasium. The number of people noted in these pictures is indicative of the popularity of this program!



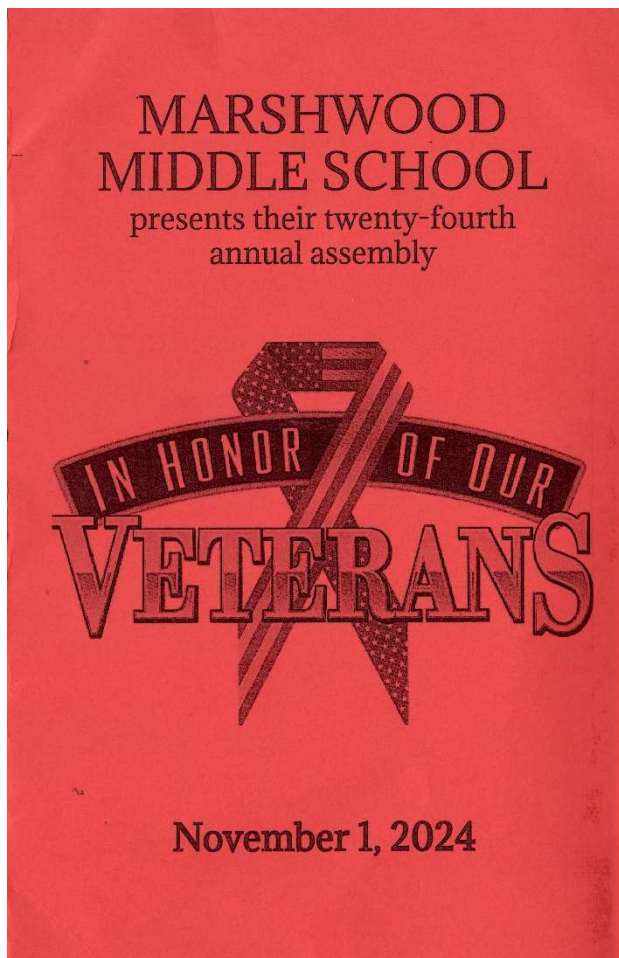
After the students, parents and guests were situated in the gymnasium, the formal program began with the **"March of the Veterans"**, whereas those honored marched into the gym, entering to the thunderous applaud of those assembled there. The honorees were seated in the middle of the gym.

The **Eliot Police Honor Guard** presented and posted the colors. The **Eighth Grade Flag Force** provided a field of United States flags as the assembly recited our *Pledge of Allegiance*. The **Eight Grade Vocal Ensemble** provided a beautiful rendition of *The National Anthem*.

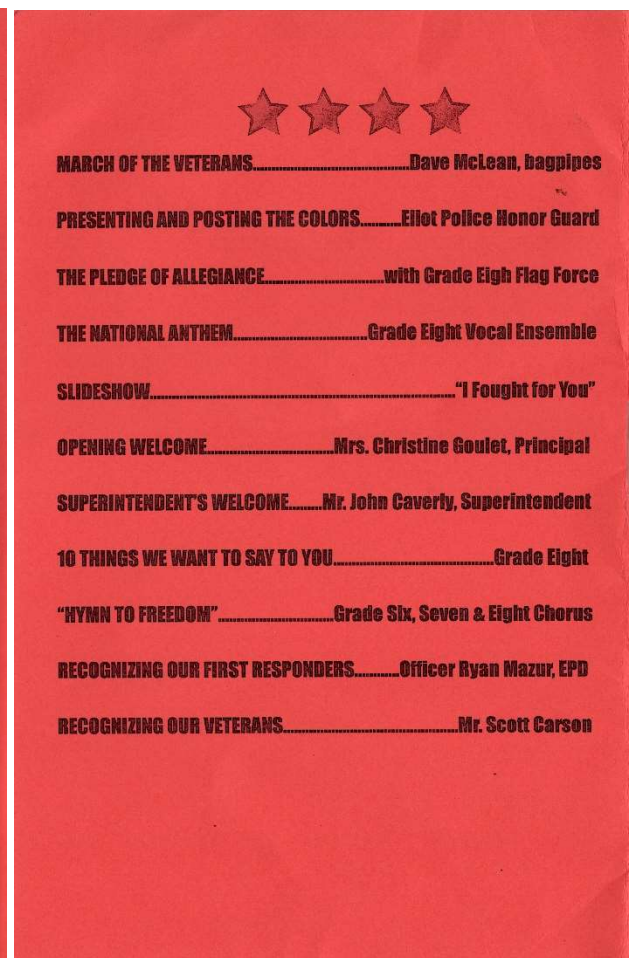
The rest of the program is as described in the following "Program Guide".



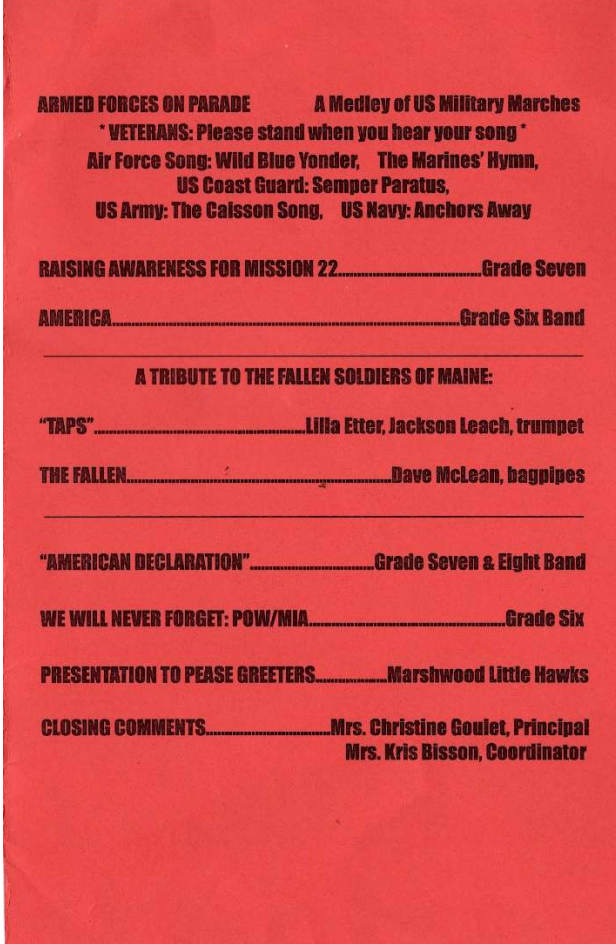
The impressive Eight Grade Flag Force



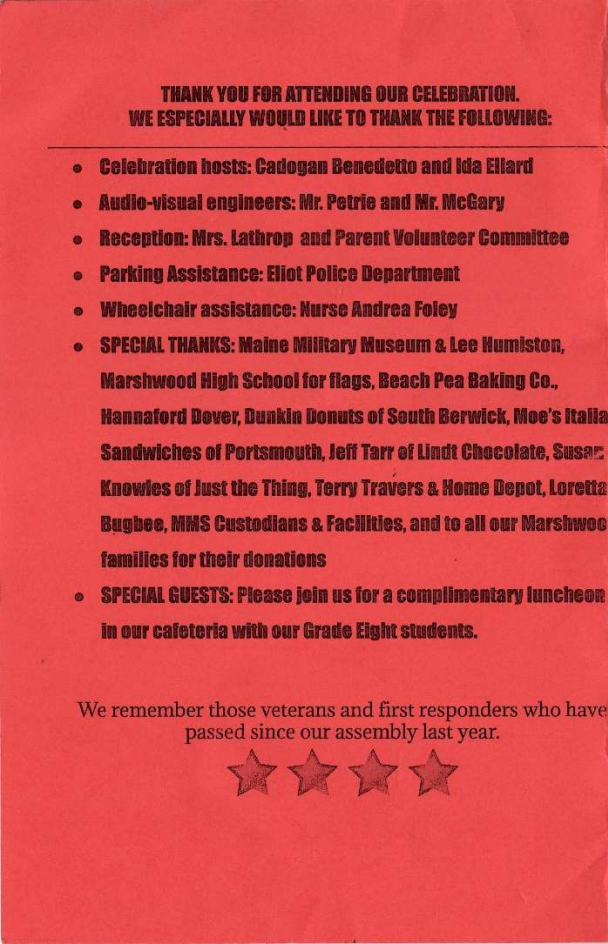
Front Cover of the *Program Guide*



First Page of the *Program Guide*



Second Page of the *Program Guide*



Back Page of the *Program Guide*

A moving short film clip by [The Sound Tank](#) titled "*I Fought for You*" noted scenes from World War II and veteran attendees relating to their participation in that war; and later indicating to their family members with them "I fought for you"!



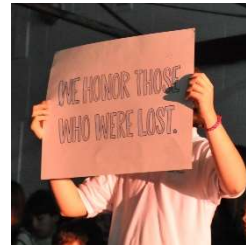
Principle Christine Goulet provided welcome comments.



Superintendent John Covert recognized those involved with the program and read the poem most associated with the Buddy Poppy "*In Flanders Fields*" by John McCrea.

The Eighth Graders read an *“Open Letter to Veterans, Active Military, and First Responders: 10 Things We’ve Been Meaning to Say to You”*. Students scattered about the bleachers hold title placards when the students at the podium read the each’s narrative. The 10 things:

- 1) Your determination is empowering and inspiring.
- 2) You are human.
- 3) You are a reminder of what is possible.
- 4) We trust you.
- 5) We respect you for what you’ve given to us.
- 6) Your sacrifices are not forgotten.
- 7) We see you.
- 8) We are grateful to your families.
- 9) We empathize with you.
- 10) We honor those who were lost.



The Marshwood “Little Hawks” football team captains presented a \$600 check from a fundraiser to the Pease Greeters. Barry Kray accepted the check on their behalf.

Honored Guests were later treated to a meal in the school’s cafeteria.



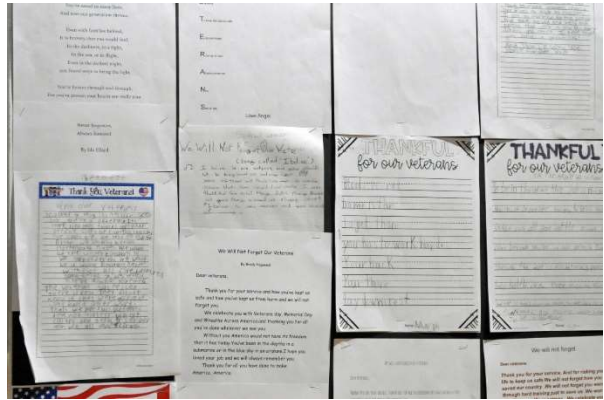
Post 5744 members included Eugene Cheney, Roger Guptil, Brian English, Hank Hanson, Barry Kray, John Denning, Bruce Brown, Mal Kenney, and Nick Tsakaris (pictured); Jeff Chase, and Mike St. Pierre (not pictured).

November 7, 2024: Members of VFW Post 5744, along with other veterans, active-duty military, and guests, at the invitation of school and program administrators, attended Marshwood Great Works School's Veterans Day Assembly.



Roger Guptill, Marc Scheele, Jeff Chase, and Barry Kray at the entrance to the gymnasium before the assembly started.

Several display boards off to the side posted “Letters to Veterans” – most were letters of thanks for your service.



The program began with the posting of the colors. The VFW Post 5744 Color Guard (Jeff with the United States flag and Marc with the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US flag) posted the colors to either side of the student choir.

Amilia and Eleanor Simpson then led the *Pledge of Allegiance*.



The MGWS 4th and 5th Grade Chorus, directed by Janice Marro, sang “The Star-Spangled Banner”



Principal Jerry Burnelle welcomed everybody to the assembly and gave opening comments.

Mrs. Morse's 5th Grade Class read the book *America's White Table*, by Margot Theis Raven, and assembled a table at the head of the assembly.



Based on *The Missing Man Table*, *America's White Table* tells the POW story of Uncle John and his cell mate Mike. The story was purposefully not based on any one particular story, but rather was compiled from different service members' acts of heroism during the Vietnam War. This choice was made to allow *America's White Table* to represent every branch of the military, and to be a universal sign of brotherhood for all MIAs and POWs.



America's White Table (a.k.a. *Missing Man Table*, *Forgotten Comrade Table*)



The MGWS 5th Grade Band, directed by Matt Taylor, performed *America*



Ten student representatives of the student body then read their essays: “Veterans, this is why we honor you”.

← Student Eva B.



Student Julia H. →

Sailors from the USS Cheyenne (SSN-773), a Los Angeles Class submarine presently stationed at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, were on hand to talk to the students and to answer questions.





Q: How long do you stay in a submarine?
 A: Longest time underwater was 119 days;
 the longest time at sea was 6 months
 Q: What was your most interesting thing?
 A: The total darkness at sea; the intensity of the
 night stars; the lack of a day/night cycle
 Q: Is there ice cream on board?
 A: Yes – One sailor’s favorite was caramel (made
 by mixing soy sauce into vanilla ice cream!)

The MGWS 5th Grade Chorus sang the traditional “A Tribute to the Armed Services”, with honored veterans and active-duty military standing for their respective branch of service.



Veteran
 and active-
 duty Army
 ←
 Veteran
 and active-
 duty Navy
 →



The VFW Post 5744 Color Guard retired the colors at the conclusion of the assembly.

Note to any who has never been to such a student assembly: 1) it is a truly humbling experience, 2) it is important that we continue to support such undertakings to help ensure they continue indefinitely!

Veterans, active-duty military, and their families were invited to a breakfast reception in the cafeteria following the assembly!