

WINTER 2010



The Beacon of Hope

EAST ISLIP UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

OUR ACADEMIC ELITE

East Islip High School Principal William Brennen recently announced the school's Top 10 academic achievers for the Class of 2010. The announcement was made in October at the annual achievement breakfast, hosted by Mr. Brennen, in honor of students who have excelled academically throughout their educational career. At the head of the class are this school year's Valedictorian, Nela Tatur, and Salutatorian, Deanna Pandolfo.



Bottom row (L-R): Nela Tatur, Deanna Pandolfo, Victor Bruno, and Shawn Smith. Top row (L-R): Eric Oswald, James Montague, Christian Reed, and Matthew Meagher.

Rounding out the Top 10, in order of #3 through #10 are: Christian Reed, Shawn Smith, Matthew Meagher, Victor Bruno, James Montague, Eric Oswald, Brendon Fusco and Mary Vetter. Congratulations to these academically elite students.

Youth Achievement Award Recipient

East Islip High School freshman Victoria Sidorski was recently named recipient of a 2009 County Executive Youth Achievement Award.



Victoria was chosen for this award based upon her demonstration of character and for serving as a role model to fellow citizens and peers. "Every community depends on unique individuals who show us how to live life to the fullest," County Executive Steve Levy said of the award recipients. Victoria was honored with a proclamation during a special ceremony at Villa Lombardi's in Holbrook.

Class of 2009 Awarded \$5 Million in Scholarships

East Islip High School's Class of 2009 was awarded more than \$5 million in total scholarship monies. This includes scholarships from local organizations, as well as college-specific scholarships, which our students qualified for through athletic and academic excellence. Scholarships ease the financial burden of attending college on both families and students. All current seniors and juniors are encouraged to explore all scholarship outlet possibilities. Congratulations again to the class of 2009!

Nine Students Selected for 2010 LISFA Groups

The East Islip School District Music Department is proud to announce the selection of nine outstanding student musicians to perform in the 2010 Long Island String Festival Association of Suffolk County string orchestras in January. They represent the most talented public school string players in the county and are selected from a pool of hundreds of outstanding students. Selection is based upon a student's superior solo adjudication score at the annual NYSSMA spring solo festival and a strong recommendation and ranking from the student's orchestra director.



EAST ISLIP HIGH SCHOOL

Holly Alper
Leah Arden
Brendon Fusco
Allison O'Brien
Cassidy Tatur
Annette Tekverk
Jessica Willdigg

EAST ISLIP MIDDLE SCHOOL

William Meehan
Carolyn Sidoti

Congratulations to the 2010 LISFA-selected students.



2 Board of Education Message

Ken Cronin, Vice President



Team and Community

This is the time of year that most emphasizes the need for our community to come together to help those who may be less fortunate than others. On behalf of

the Board of Education, I would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year.

TEAM

By definition, a “team” is a number of persons associated together in work or activity. So a club or organization is synonymous with a team.

A few years ago when I didn’t feel that my son was getting enough playing time on the football team, he, being wise beyond my years said: “It’s okay dad, it’s all about the TEAM.” At first I was taken aback. What a great lesson

had been taught to both of us - the concept of the TEAM.

The team is not just about sports. The team is used in almost every part of our adult society. When you go to school, your class is your team. When you apply for a job, you are applying to be part of a team. The whole interview process is about how well you will fit in with the team. In order to have a successful company, you have to have all parts working together as a team.

There are some fields where the “TEAM” is of the utmost importance. If you are in the military, your life depends on your team.

The goal of our athletic clubs and teams is to have the best season they can. This is usually measured by wins and losses. Wins and losses are just a measure of how well all the parts of the club or team are working together. Clubs and teams are also a building process. One season may be better or worse than the previous season. This is because some of the

parts have been changed through students graduating or moving on to other things.

COMMUNITY

The word community, by definition, is a group of people living in the same locality. I would like to think that the residents of East Islip, Islip Terrace and Great River are part of the same community. We, “the residents,” are all part of a “CLUB” or “TEAM” that strives to make our community as successful as possible.

The best way to make our community successful is to tap into our resources. Our children are our most valuable resource. We should all work together to provide the best for our children. The children should be given every opportunity to grow to their fullest potential.

Our children learn from us. Not just by words, but also by actions. In 2010, let’s start anew, and show our children by example how, we, THE COMMUNITY, can work together as a “CLUB” or “TEAM” for all of our residents.

Superintendent’s Message

Wendell Chu



What’s in a word? So much can be contained in a single word and many meanings can be perceived from a simple phrase. The word “Thanks” or

“Love” can express a

multitude of emotions, depending on the facial expression or intonation that goes with it. No note, document, book, or even a scrap of paper can fully convey the meaning of the words printed on the paper. In the electronic

world, a text, IM, blog, or tweet is just a part of a whole that needs a context to convey the full meaning. Take a word and try to perform a Google search, and you will see a myriad of sites, many unconnected except for the single search word.

So what’s the point of this? We, as humans, connect with each other to communicate our true meaning. When time, distance, or space does not allow, we communicate in written form, but this is a poor substitute for the personal contact

used to convey meaning. I have written reports and presented information to many groups, and find that most valuable interactions I have are the ones that involve personal contact. It is in that contact that I have been able to best convey my meaning, as well as capture the meanings of the people with whom I meet.

As we begin this New Year, I hope that you will find the value in connecting with people, and I will continue to be open to talking and meeting with members of our community.

Asst. Superintendent’s Message

Alise Becker-Santa (Instruction)



The 2009/2010 school year brings significant changes from the New York State Education Department that affects students in grades 3-8. In the past, students have been assessed in the area of

English Language Arts in January and mathematics in March. This year, both of these important assessments will be administered in the spring. Students will be tested in English Language Arts from April 26th through April 28th and in mathematics from May 5th through May 9th. The change in dates for these assessments has generated much discussion among educators across New York State.

Positive aspects of this change include the opportunity for teachers to have a greater portion of the school year in which to teach

grade-level standards and skills prior to the administration of the assessments. These months can be utilized to more effectively identify areas where students excel and those areas in which students require additional reinforcement.

The decision also presents some challenges. In the past, 4th graders have taken the science assessment and 8th graders have taken both the science and social studies assessments in the late spring, while other New York State assessments were spread out over a period of several months. This year, however, 4th graders will be taking three and 8th graders will be taking four assessments within several weeks. Additionally, the revised New York State calendar provides a very short time frame in which students are tested and exams must be scored. Districts are scrambling to formulate alternate methods of scoring these exams while meeting these difficult time constraints. It is important to

minimize the number of days teachers are out of the classroom and away from their students. In our district, we have scheduled two Superintendent’s Conference Days, May 10th and May 17th. On these days students in grades 1-8 will not have school so that we can utilize our professional staff to participate in scoring in as few days as possible.

My staff and I will continue to work closely with administrators across the district to accommodate New York State’s new testing calendar and assure students are not adversely affected by the changes. Our teachers will continue to make modifications to the curriculum to assure that necessary skills and concepts are taught and reinforced prior to the assessment period. These changes came as a surprise to many, but we expect them to cause minimal changes to our students’ achievement.

I look forward to sharing the assessment data with our community when it becomes available. It is a pleasure to serve the East Islip community and its most precious commodity, our children.

A Stellar Homecoming

Highlights A Successful Season



Homecoming King Jake Comiskey and Homecoming Queen Michelle Mandile were crowned at East Islip High School's Pep Rally.

Despite the fall chill and the threat of rain, East Islip High School held its annual homecoming parade and game on Saturday, October 17th. Representatives from each of the high school classes proudly stood by their floats, which they created to the theme of "board games" this year. This year's homecoming king and queen, crowned at the pep rally, were seniors Michelle Mandile and Jake Comiskey.

Even with unseasonably cool weather, the stands were filled with loyal East Islip fans showing their support of the Redmen's Varsity Football team. In this year's homecoming game against the West Babylon Eagles, the Redmen started out strong and the defense stood tall, treating the crowd to a 21-0 shutout victory. Quarterback Mike Rooney passed for 86 yards and two touchdowns, one to Trevor McNerny and the other to Joe Barclay, who also ran for a touchdown. Overall, the Redmen had a great season, with a 9-2 record, advancing to the County Division II Finals.



East Islip Middle School students were dressed appropriately (in red) to support the Varsity Football Redmen.



The senior class won this year's float contest with their portrayal of the classic children's game Hungry, Hungry Hippos.



The East Islip Redmen scored a touchdown in the first few minutes of play against West Babylon to cruise to a 21-0 victory.

Career Academy Kicks Off the New Year

East Islip High School continued its school-to-business partnership with the kickoff of the Career Academy. This pilot program brings together teachers in six core subject areas to develop and integrate a theme into their curriculum in an effort to challenge student performance on a career-driven level. This year they are continuing the theme of Environment Green.

The Environment Green Kickoff was the Career Academy's first event of the school year with a goal to raise awareness about green energy alternatives and resources available. This year's kickoff featured representatives from the Town of Islip's Recycling Program, Atlantis Animal Rescue, Home Performance Technologies and e2 Sys (wind energy). Students, parents and community members were given the opportunity to circulate through the different vendors and learn about or experience the available green resources on Long Island. Home Performance Technologies, for example, brought an infrared camera that shows differences in temperature for the purpose of determining where heat or cooled air escapes a home. The company raffled-off a free energy audit, valued at approximately \$500. Students had the opportunity to be present for the audit and learn firsthand about methods to conserve energy in the home.



Jessica Schwinn from Home Performance Technologies demonstrates how an infrared camera pinpoints where heat or cooled air escapes a home.



Students witnessed an accurate representation of the water cycle on Long Island.



Career Academy members, teachers and advisors gathered to host the big event.

◆ NEWS AROUND OUR E

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Singing School Bus Driver



Pictured is Joe the Singing Bus Driver during his performance.

Students at the Early Childhood Center were treated to a special performance by Joe Guida, better known as The Singing School Bus Driver. Mr. Guida, who was a bus driver for 30 years before touring schools as the singing bus driver, performs interactive, educational songs about school, safety and, of course, riding the bus. As part of his presentation, The Singing Bus Driver asks students to sing along with him and learn the lyrics of songs such as, "I'm Getting Ready for School," during which students recite the essentials of their morning routine, and "The Buckle-Up Song," which focuses on school bus safety.

CONNETQUOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Giving Thanks This Holiday SEASON

For the past six years, fifth graders at Connetquot Elementary School have been celebrating Thanksgiving with an annual feast. With each student donating \$4, parents use the money to purchase turkey, stuffing and potatoes from a local deli. The purchased food, in addition to donated items such as vegetables, corn bread, fruit, pie and desserts, is presented buffet-style to students during the week of Thanksgiving.

The event serves as a way to reinforce the purpose of Thanksgiving as a day of giving thanks. This year, school social worker Vivian VanKoolwijk arranged for any leftover food items to be donated to a shelter in Port Jefferson, where she works with the less fortunate. In addition, students created placemats, which also went to the shelter. "Placemats give those at the shelter a sense of home and comfort," Ms. VanKoolwijk said about the students donating these items. "That's important for them during Thanksgiving." She also urged students to be thankful for all that they have all year round and not just during the holidays.



JOHN F. KENNEDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

GOING BATTY OVER EDUCATION



Third-grade students at John F. Kennedy Elementary School not only learned about bats for the Halloween season; they built their own bat houses. Each class participated in a 75-minute workshop about bats, hosted by Zephyr Jost from the Cornell Cooperative Extension Program. Students learned about bat behavior, types of bats, bat anatomy and why bats are important to the community they inhabit.

The workshop culminated with each student constructing the ideal bat house from wood. The house not only serves as a shelter to keep bats warm, but as a means for students to study bats in their own backyard. As the primary predators of night-flying insects, bats play a vital role in maintaining the balance of nature and control the number of yard and garden pests. A single little brown bat can catch hundreds of mosquito-sized insects an hour, and a typical colony of big brown bats can protect local farmers from the costly attacks of 18 million rootworms each summer.



Pictured are some highlights from the program with Ms. Wilson's third-grade students.

STUDENT CHOSEN FOR PIANO SHOWCASE

Michael Stevens, a fifth-grade student at John F. Kennedy Elementary School, was selected as an alternate performer for the 4th Annual Piano Showcase at the New York State School Music Association's (NYSSMA) Winter Conference. Michael was selected based upon his outstanding performance at the NYSSMA solo festival. In addition to the piano, Michael also plays the French horn. "As a fifth-grade student, Michael is considered one of the top piano players in the state," District Director for Music and Fine Arts John Spiezio III said. "With only 11 students being selected to perform, East Islip is proud of his selection as an alternate."



Michael was also selected to perform in the Long Island Philharmonic Master Class with Seymour Lipkin.

Mr. Lipkin is a master pianist who is on the piano and chamber music faculties of the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School. Michael performed with Mr. Lipkin on November 16 at the Steinway Piano Gallery in Melville.

Michael is pictured with JFK music teacher Sara Rose Nocero and District Director for Music and Fine Arts John Spiezio III.

RUTH C. KINNEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Baking Bread for a Good Cause

Second-grade students in Ms. Tomasello's class at Ruth C. Kinney Elementary School took the season of giving to heart. During the month of November, students created placemats out of construction paper and decorated them with illustrations. The placemats were then laminated and donated to a local shelter, along with pumpkin bread that students made the week of Thanksgiving. With the help of class parents, students followed a recipe and made five loaves of pumpkin bread to benefit others this Thanksgiving holiday.



Pictured is Ms. Tomasello's class with their placemats.

Students Learn Conflict Resolution



Renshi Frank Olmeda and Sempei Jessica Longo discuss how to focus the mind and body with first-grade students in Mr. Ruhli's and Miss Rabin's gym classes.

Students at Ruth C. Kinney Elementary School were visited by representatives from the LI Ninjutsu Center, who taught the children about conflict resolution.

Members of LI Ninjutsu Center, Renshi Frank Olmeda, Sempei Jessica Longo and Sensei Ryan Frank, have been donating their time with students.

"We are trying to keep our community safe," Sempei Jessica Longo said of the program, which has also visited the students at Timber Point Elementary School.

During the workshop, students are taught to focus on their mind and body, and that

when someone says something hurtful to them or is looking for a fight, to say "thank you" and walk away. Children were also taught some Japanese words used in Ninjutsu, as well as basic sitting, standing and kicking positions, which students were able to perform themselves, alongside the instructors.

TIMBER POINT ELEMENTARY

Largest Vets Ceremony



Students at Timber Point Elementary School honored local veterans and their families with a special ceremony on November 6. In

their eighth year of hosting this celebration, this was the largest turnout they have had to date. The celebration featured special choral performances by third-grade students and a flute ensemble performance of "The Caissons Go Rolling Along."

American veterans from East Islip Post 18, with assistance from Cub Scout members from Pack 205, taught students the ceremonious Folding of the Flag. Fifth-graders were also given the opportunity to ask questions of these heroes who served our country in the various branches of military service. Prior to the ceremony, snacks and refreshments were served, courtesy of the school's PTA.



6 Students Learn It's *All in the Timing*



East Islip High School's Drama Club recently performed their first production of the school year. Under the direction of advisor Mrs. Affelt, the cast performed *All in the Timing*, which is a collection of six one-act plays. This production marked a significant milestone for the club, as it was the first time their play was translated into sign language during the performance. The translation came about because a member of the club is a student from the district's Cleary School for the Deaf.

Cast photo (L-R): Al Samartino, Tom Gianni, Caitlin Condon, David Bruno, Amanda DaSilva, Clayton Howe and Nicole Fragala. On the floor is Ryan Kelly. Not pictured, but also part of the production, is Justin Ovalle.

Learning from a Real Pro

East Islip Middle School students in Diane Perry's seventh-grade physical education classes were treated to a special guest instructor during their unit on tennis. Founder and Executive Director of the Suffolk County Junior Tennis Leagues Mr. Joe Arias volunteered to teach students proper tennis skills and rules of the game (as pictured). "He is encouraging to the kids because he knows what he is doing and builds enthusiasm among the students," said teacher Ms. Perry of Mr. Arias, who is a national coach trainer with over 39 years of tennis experience.



Into the Wild



As part of the East Islip High School's Career Academy 'green' curriculum, students were treated to a special visit from a

representative of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Ron Gelardi, a Regional Environmental Educator with the DEC (pictured), discussed animal protection, inappropriate house pets, and the effects of pet trade, pollution, over-hunting, and habitat loss on wild animals. Mr. Gelardi brought a few live animals and artifacts with him, and shared testimony of dangerous, inappropriate house pets such as large snakes and even tigers. His story cautioned students to always properly research any pet before bringing it into their home.

Meet My Buddy

Currently in its first year, the EI Buddies program is a sports initiative that benefits students with special needs who are typically unable to participate on a regular athletic team. Open to students in grades kindergarten through fifth, the students are buddied up with members of the Girls Varsity Leaders Club. Buddies meet twice a month for the entire school year and engage in group activities, as well as individual activities such as bowling, bean bag toss, hopscotch, jump rope and scooters. To keep everyone interested, the activities change every few weeks. Currently, there are 36 Leaders Club members who volunteer to be buddies with 23 kindergarten through fifth graders.

Together, the buddies engage in activities that allow the little buddies to socialize, have fun, and get some physical exercise.

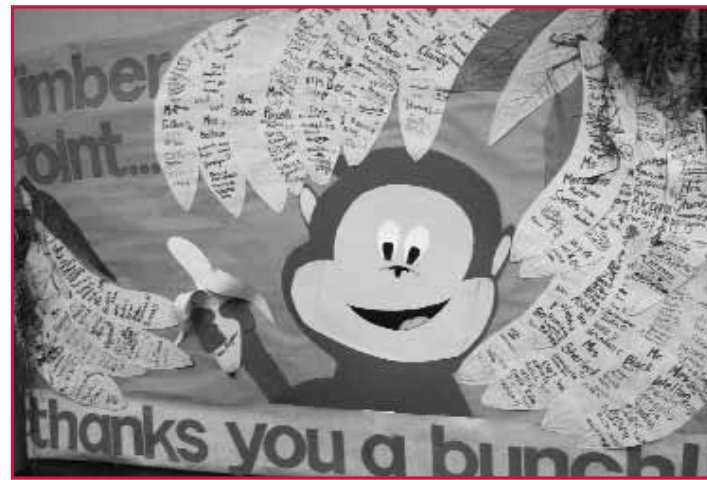




East Islip Board Honored

In honor of New York State Board Recognition Week, the East Islip Board of Education was acknowledged at their October Board of Education meeting. Each school in the district was represented with a work of art or letters of thanks written from students to the members of the Board

of Education. The five members of East Islip's Board of Education work tirelessly and without pay to bring about the best opportunities available to the children of East Islip, and act in their best interest at all times. Pictured are some of the artwork and items of thanks that students created for the Board.



FTK Swings for Education, Honors Local Supporter

The East Islip For The Kids (FTK) foundation recently held its 10th annual Golf Outing to raise funds in support of academic, cultural, and recreation programs for East Islip School District students. This year, FTK named Chris Portera as the 'Fore the Kids' Golf Outing honoree, for his local efforts to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and his support for children in the greater East Islip and Islip communities.

More than 100 participants teed off at Island Hills Golf Club in Great River amidst cold, rainy weather to raise monies for FTK's efforts. Several East Islip school officials and administrators, including Superintendent of Schools Wendell Chu, Board of Education President Kim Phillips, assistant superintendents and building principals, contributed to the cause. Numerous local businesses and sponsors donated prizes that were raffled off.

Born and raised in East Islip and a 1978 graduate of East Islip High School, Mr. Portera is the Proprietor/President of Ocean Janitorial Supply, Inc. In 2008, his company received a National Small Business Partnership Award for its work with people with disabilities in the workplace. A major contributor to FTK through the years, Mr. Portera is involved in many charitable efforts, including serving as President of Islip Children's Endowment (ICE) Fund, a foundation similar to FTK that provides educational opportunities for students of the Islip School District.

Mr. Portera is also a member of Fecap Rehabilitation Services, is a major sponsor of YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities, volunteers for the Boomer Esiason Foundation, and serves on the Islip High School Business Advisory Board, the Islip Youth Lacrosse Board and the Brookhaven YMCA Board. In addition to all of this, he also coaches Little League, soccer and basketball locally.

Congratulations to Mr. Portera, FTK and all of the contributors who lent their time, money and expertise to create more opportunities for students of the East Islip School District.



The For The Kids (FTK) foundation of East Islip honored local volunteer and humanitarian Chris Portera at its annual 'Fore the Kids' golf outing. Pictured (l-r) are FTK Vice President Nancy Goldfader, East Islip Superintendent of Schools Wendell Chu, honoree Chris Portera, FTK President Patricia Diesu, and FTK Golf Outing Chairpersons Margaret Burnham and Steven Etimos.

East Islip Union Free School District

Craig B. Gariepy Avenue • Islip Terrace, NY 11752

*** ECRWSS *** Postal Customer • Local Resident Delivery

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 44
East Islip, NY 11730

UPCOMING STUDENT *PERFORMANCES*

East Islip High School Musical

Kiss Me Kate

March 18, 19, & 20
8:00 PM

at Rydzeski Hall at EIHS

Ticket information will be posted on the district website during the month of February.

East Islip Middle School

Presents



Music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Howard Ashman and Tim Rice music adapted and arranged by Jim Luigs, based on a screenplay by Ron Clements, John Musker and Terry Rossio.

February 5 and 6, 2010
7:30pm

TICKETS: \$9

Reserved Seating at East Islip Middle School Auditorium
(631) 224-2158

Honoring the *Artists* of East Islip

At the November 12 and December 10 Board of Education meetings, East Islip School District's Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools Wendell Chu, and District Director of Art & Music John Spiezio III honored student artists whose work was published in the district's 2009-2010 school calendar. Students whose artwork was featured alongside the calendar pages received a special certificate of recognition and the opportunity to proudly show their artwork to community members and the Board of Education.



John F. Kennedy Elementary School students whose work was featured in the month of November, with (L-R) JFK Principal Aileen O'Connor, Board of Education President Kim G. Phillips, Superintendent Wendell Chu, and Director of Art & Music John Spiezio III.

"All children are born artists," said Mr. Spiezio, quoting Picasso. "The challenge is to remain artists as they grow up." He continued, "East Islip teachers strive to maintain that talent each and every day." In total, 30 pieces of student artwork were chosen for inclusion in the calendar among the thousands created districtwide. Congratulations to all of the students on this accomplishment.



Pictured are students from Mrs. Larado's classes at East Islip Middle School who had work featured in October, along with (L-R) Mr. John Spiezio III, Board President Kim G. Phillips, art teacher Mrs. Larado, and Superintendent Wendell Chu.



• BOARD OF EDUCATION •

Kim G. Phillips, President
Ken Cronin, Vice President • Louis F. Raffone, Trustee
Glenn Reed, Trustee • Joseph G. Sargent, Trustee
Wendell Chu, Superintendent of Schools

This newsletter is published by the Board of Education as a community service to inform the public of school news and business. If you have any questions, please feel free to call 224-2000 or fax 581-1617. Visit our website at www.eischools.org

PLEASE STRIP IN INDICIAS



Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 6
Islip Terrace, NY 11752

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 6
Great River, NY 11739