



# The Reporter

The Official Newsletter of the Three Village School District

Dear Residents,

The Board of Education and central office administrators are currently working to develop a fiscally responsible and financially stable budget for the 2009-2010 school year. The proposed budget is scheduled for adoption on April 14th and will be voted on by residents on May 19th.

This year's budget season has once again proposed a number of challenges for not only our district, but for all school districts throughout the state. Expenditures continue to rise while our revenues, especially in the area of state aid, are projected to be less than the amount received last year. Please be assured that we are cognizant of these challenges and are working to develop a budget that preserves our excellent academic program in the most cost-efficient manner possible.

As we work through this process, I am very proud to share with you some of the terrific things going on in our schools. Detailed in the pages of this publication is just a sampling of the outstanding accomplishments achieved by our students. In addition to these highlights, and as a new component to our Board meetings, we have begun publicly recognizing our students' great achievements. I encourage you to read through this and future editions of The Reporter as well as attend our Board meetings to keep informed of the great things happening in Three Village.

Looking toward the future, I am confident that with your continued support we can build upon the district's tradition of excellence.

Sincerely yours,

Ralph P. Ferrie  
Superintendent of Schools

## They Did It...AGAIN!

### WARD MELVILLE RANKED HIGHEST IN STATE

Ward Melville High School is widely known for its exemplary science research program, InSTAR, and that reputation was solidified again this January when it was announced that the school had 11 Semifinalists in the Intel Science Talent Search – the highest number of Semifinalists in one school in New York State and the third highest number in the country.

"Many hours of hard work and unbounded enthusiasm are required to reach the levels of achievement we celebrate here today," stated Board of Education member Diane Peritore. "These students aren't waiting for the future to come to them...they are grasping the future in their hands and helping to form its shape."

Three hundred Intel Semifinalists were named from schools from around the globe. For this honor, each student received a \$1,000 prize, and their school receives an additional \$1,000. Forty finalists will be named, each of who will receive an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. to compete for more than \$500,000 in prizes.

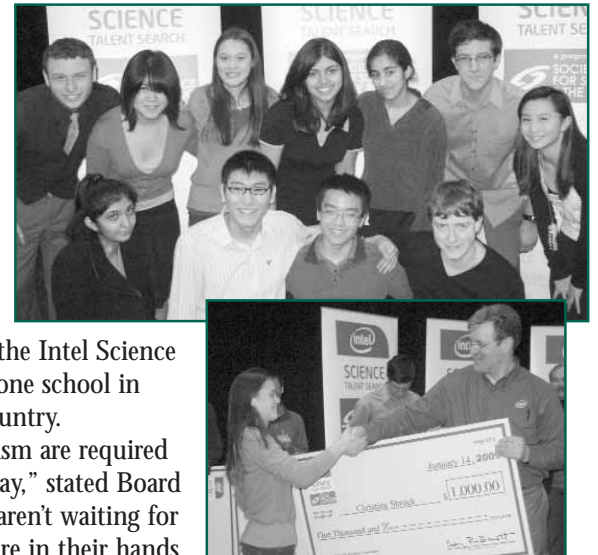
Congratulations to this year's Ward Melville High School Intel Semifinalists:

David Gittin  
Michael Gurevich  
Jason Karelis

Hiba Khan  
Amy Lin  
Jie Min

Naureen Osman  
Taejoong Park  
Preya Shah

Christine Shrock  
Yuanchi Zhao



## PATRIOTS NAMED STATE CHAMPIONS

Congratulations to the Ward Melville High School Girls Varsity Field Hockey Team, who accomplished something that no other Ward Melville field hockey team had previously done – winning the Class A New York State Championship title. Under the leadership of co-coaches, Shannon Watson and Nancy Cole, the team took on Williamsville North and triumphed over the competition to a 2-0 win.

## BOND PROJECT UPDATE

The work included in the district's \$72.8 million bond referendum, which was passed by the community last October, is well underway. The total scope of the project was broken down into four phases, each of which are in various stages of completion.

To date, all of the projects in **Phase I**, which included the creation of sixth-grade science centers at each of the Elementary Schools, the installation of two turf fields at Ward Melville High School, the renovation of the Black Box Theater at Ward Melville High School (formally the LGI), and several other large-scale projects are 99% complete.

**Phase II**, which includes a variety of work at the North Country Administrative Center, is now underway. This phase, which will allow for the

district's two administrative offices (the Nicolls Road facility and the North Country Center) to consolidate, is expected to be completed in June.

The projects included in **Phase III** are currently out to bid. This component of the project includes the reconstruction of the junior high school tennis courts, the renovation of the HS fitness center, as well as the creation of new science classrooms at the high school and a music/auditorium suite.

The final component, **Phase IV**, is with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) awaiting approval. This phase is comprised of the renovations planned for the junior high schools' auditoriums, music rooms, and art and home and careers classrooms.

Three Village Central School District  
200 Nicolls Road  
Stony Brook, NY 11790

**\*\*ECRWSS\*\***  
Postal Patron

Nonprofit  
U.S. Postage PAID  
E. SETAUKET, N.Y.  
PERMIT NO.10



R.C. Murphy Junior High School science teacher Sarah Doepp, technology teacher Derek Angermaier, and Family and Consumer Science teacher Cynthia Carrucciu were selected to receive MESTRACT grants from the Mid-East Suffolk Teacher Center.



Ward Melville High School health teachers Maureen Kost and Linda Barrett were selected to receive MESTRACT grants from the Mid-East Suffolk Teacher Center for their project called "None for the Road."

## GRANTS FUNDED TO FURTHER EDUCATION

The district is proud to announce that ten teachers and one administrator have been acknowledged as leaders in their fields and been awarded MESTRACT grants from the Mid-East Suffolk Teacher Center. This organization supports new and innovative ideas in teaching through the funding of Terri Peters Mini Grants, Technology Grants, Parent Projects, and Design Your Own Staff Development Grants.

In order to be considered to receive one of these grants, the recipients needed to complete a comprehensive application process, including detailing how their proposed project was aligned with the New York State Standards for education.

Congratulations to the following Three Village educators:

### Terri Peters Mini-Grant Program Recipients:

**Kerry Magnuson** – "Get to the 'Heart' of the Matter" Project

**Cynthia Carrucciu** – "Connecting Students to their Community Through Service-Learning" Project

**Antonio Santana** – "Rachel's Challenge" Project

**Corinne Connors** – "Rachel's Challenge" Project

**Pete Schuchman** – "Rachel's Challenge" Project

**Sarah Doepp** – "Citizen Science: Classroom FeederWatch" Project

**Derek Angermaier** – "Citizen Science: Classroom FeederWatch" Project

**Barbara Kmioteck** – "Weather Station – Future Weather Reporters" Project

**Allison Cooper** – "Weather Station – Future Weather Reporters" Project

### Technology Mini-Grant Program Recipients:

**Linda Barrett** – "None for the Road" Project

**Maureen Kost** – "None for the Road" Project

## BOARD AGENDAS GO ELECTRONIC

In addition to hearing recordings from previous meetings, community members are now able to access the agendas and support materials for upcoming Board of Education meetings online. The agendas are posted to the district website, [www.threevillagecsd.org](http://www.threevillagecsd.org), prior to each meeting, and include the list of areas that will be discussed as well as several attachments with background information on those topics.

While residents are encouraged to access the agendas online, a limited number of printed copies will continue to be provided during the Board meetings for those unable to access the Internet. Additionally, with the goal of reducing the amount of paper goods utilized during Board meetings, the printed packets previously provided for administrators, PTA members, and other constituency groups have been eliminated, as they too have access to the online version.

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL UPDATE

A districtwide Curriculum Development Council began meeting earlier this year to facilitate a comprehensive review of the programs implemented and instructional methods utilized at both the elementary and secondary levels. The council is chaired by Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary, Kenneth Bossert, Ed.D. and Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Secondary, Mary Castiglie.

This fall, at the **secondary level**, the council reviewed new course proposals, made recommendations to the Board of Education on these proposals, completed an extensive review of core classes and submitted additional courses to the NCAA Clearinghouse, and established a new evaluation form for curriculum writing projects. Throughout the winter, curriculum writing guidelines will be established and a cyclical review will commence. This review will help the council identify a cycle in which curriculum areas should be reviewed. Throughout the spring, new curriculum writing proposals will be reviewed, recommendations will be made to the Board of Education, and the goals for the 2009-2010 school year will be established.

The council has also begun working on a cyclical review process at the **elementary level** and introduced two new tools for evaluating curriculum development projects and programs. New report card templates are currently being evaluated and it is the council's hope that changes will not only be better suited for the grade levels, but will help to increase the use of the parent portal. Lastly, a new writing rubric was created for grades K-6 and, in the upcoming months, a review of the K-1 mathematics program will take place.

Spanning both levels, the writing program utilized in grades K-12 and the grade 6-8 reading program was analyzed and curriculum writing methods, Understanding by Design, which is a philosophy that dictates to "Begin with the End in Mind," were implemented as a standardized way of reviewing curriculum writing projects after they are completed.

## Budgeting for 2009-2010

Over the years, the development of the district's annual school budget has evolved into a yearlong collaborative effort, including central and building administrators, staff, and community residents.

Throughout the month of January, the district's principals and department directors worked to develop their area's preliminary budget requests. These individuals each analyzed their previous budgets and worked to project what increases or decreases were needed. In February, central office administrators, including Superintendent of Schools Ralph P. Ferrie, Ed.D. and Assistant Superintendent for Business Jeff Carlson, will review these submissions and work to create a comprehensive district budget.

"This year's economic climate poses several challenges for districts," stated Mr. Carlson. "The unpredictability of the future of State Aid is a large obstacle for us to overcome as we begin to prepare our financial plan for next year. During our development process we will use the State Aid figures Governor Paterson proposed in December in order to better create a fiscally responsible budget for the 2009-2010 school year."

Overviews of the proposed budget will be provided during Board of Education meetings starting in March. Meeting dates are listed in the district calendar and on the district website.

Additional presentations will also be made during PTA and other constituency group meetings. Please contact the business office at 730-4020 with any questions or if you would like to schedule a meeting for a local group.

# Invested in School Safety

## Ward Melville High School Hosts Tabletop Exercise With Police Officials

Just as it is for other school districts throughout the country, the safety and security of its students, staff, and schools remain a top priority for the district. Even though the district already has a wide variety of safety procedures in place, district administrators are constantly reviewing and enhancing these practices in order to keep them current and ensure that the proper individuals are aware of their roles should an emergency situation occur. Recently, Ward Melville High School was selected to put their practices to the test and participate in a unique learning experience as part of a tabletop exercise with members of law enforcement.

"Our school's and district's emergency plan is seen by some to be ahead of the curve," stated Ward Melville High School Assistant Principal Mike Owen, who is also a member of the school's and district's emergency management and first responder teams. "However, you can never stop learning and adjusting your protocols...as we hear of incidents taking place in other schools around the country, there are always things we can do to improve

and/or enhance our emergency procedures."

Members of the Suffolk County Homeland Security division, Hostage Negotiation Unit, a Special Patrol Officer, and an Emergency Services Officer conducted the program, which was called the School Incident Emergency Guidance Exercise 'Siege'.

Addressing the crowd, Suffolk County Homeland Security Deputy Chief Mark White stated, "The most important thing you can do is to practice your emergency procedures and be prepared for anything that may occur. Your immediate response is critical...the minute a situation occurs, you have to be prepared to react."

Throughout the event, members of the building and district's emergency management team worked with the police officers to run through a simulated potential risk situation. The exercise detailed a school day during which an armed individual gains access to Ward Melville High School and the events that took place following his arrival. During the simulation, the district officials explained what protocols they would put into place while the police



officials provided some additional items to consider during this fictional simulation.

"I was extremely pleased with how the program unfolded," stated Mr. Owen. "Through this event I learned a few things and left with a strong focus on monitoring the access people have to not only our building, but also the entire Ward Melville High School campus."

In addition to Ward Melville, several other Long Island School Districts were in attendance for the event, including neighboring Port Jefferson School District. Director of Maintenance and Operations Bob Hanson, Lead Security Guard Ray Dohren, Ward Melville Principal Dr. Alan Baum, Security Guard Kevin O'Leary, and Ward Melville Assistant Principal Mike Owen served on the panel during this event.

## GELINAS STUDENT & THREE VILLAGE TEACHER Present at New York State Music Conference

It is said that music is an art form that can be appreciated by anyone, no matter his or her age or ability. In Three Village, music is something that permeates into many areas and is cherished by countless students and adults.

John Adam Strub, an eighth grader at P.J. Gelinias Junior High School, is just one of those students who was bitten by the "music bug" early in life and who continues to have a deep passion for it today, enjoying both playing and composing. Not even the fact that he is visually impaired has stopped John Adam from exploring his love of music. This year, in an effort to share his music experiences and how it has changed his life, John Adam, along with Three Village Central School District Student Composition Program Director Dr. Daniel Deutsch, presented at the New York State School Music Association's All-State Winter Conference. Their workshop was titled "Music Composition/Improvisation: Creativity Without Boundaries."

During the session, Dr. Deutsch and John Adam discussed and demonstrated how composition and improvisation can empower various types of special learners. John Adam spoke about his experience in composition and demonstrated his achievement while his father, John Strub, added comments from a parent's perspective.

"Music is a very important part of my life," stated John Adam. "It helps me show emotion and be creative without being judged. With music you can do what you want and others respect you for it."

The district's composition program was previously highlighted by PBS television, a documentary that sparked NYSSMA's Music for Special Learners Chairperson Elise Sobol's interest.

"Ms. Sobol contacted me and asked us to present a workshop session during the conference to highlight how a composition program such as ours can benefit special learners," stated Dr. Deutsch. "It's funny because I never thought of any student as a 'special learner,' rather that each student was special in their own way. However, the way we teach our student composition program is similar to a special education class – given the facts that our lessons are very individualized and the assessments are geared to each student."

When asked what he thought about speaking before the crowd, John Adam stated, "I hope to inspire others and encourage the educators to offer a program like this in their schools. Composition is a great way to encourage students to express themselves creatively, especially if they cannot do it in other ways."



*"It helps me show emotion and be creative without being judged. With music you can do what you want and others respect you for it."*

## Ward Melville Named as a Prizewinning School

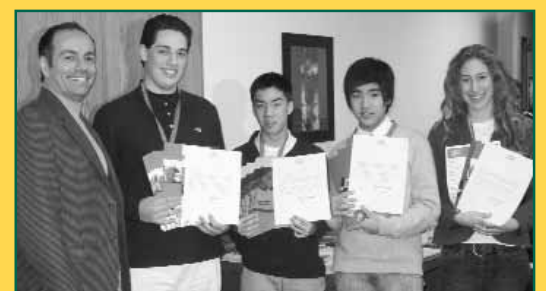
Ward Melville High School has been selected as a prizewinner in the Samsung's Hope for Education contest. For this honor, the school has been awarded \$61,000 in prizes, including \$30,000 in Samsung equipment, \$30,000 in Microsoft software, and a \$1,000 DIRECTV package. Only 30 schools nationwide were awarded this honor.



Ward Melville High School was nominated by psychology and world history teacher Robert Wilson, who wrote an essay describing how the school could benefit from being selected as a contest winner.

## COLLEGE DECISIONS COME EARLY

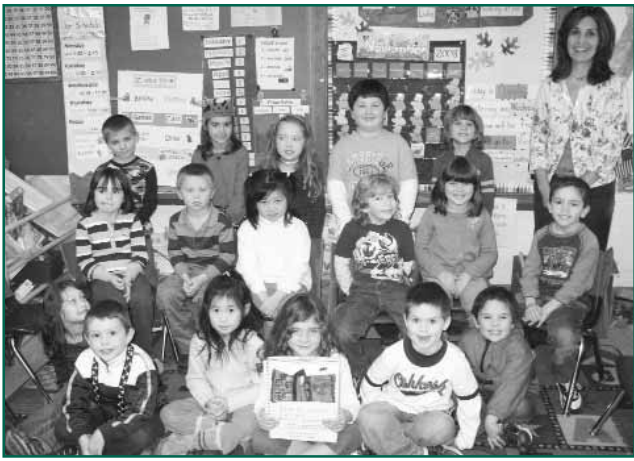
Anyone who has gone through the college application process knows just how stressful that time can be. In an effort to provide some relief to anxious seniors and help them complete their application process, Ward Melville High School embarked on unique collaborations with several Long Island colleges and universities this fall.



During the "On-Site Admissions Programs", college admissions staff visited with seniors to conduct personal interviews, evaluate their applications, and ultimately render a decision for acceptance and if the students qualify for any scholarships. Students came to their interviews prepared with completed applications, high school transcripts, and SAT/ACT scores. This year, hundreds of students registered to participate in the program.

"This is a great program that not only allows students to see where they stand with the school, but also helps them practice interviewing and make connections with the school's admissions staff," stated Associate Dean at SUNY Stony Brook Robert Pertusati. "While the school they meet with might not be their top choice, on-the-spot acceptance into any of these great schools is a nice insurance clause for the students," added Ward Melville guidance counselor Steven Levenson, who noted that students who applied to any of the SUNY schools generally don't find out if they are accepted until March or April.

Ward Melville began offering this program to seniors nine years ago. At that time, the school's only partner was SUNY Stony Brook. Today, the program has expanded and includes on-site programs with St. Joseph's College, Hofstra University, Adelphi University, Dowling College, C.W. Post University, and SUNY Farmingdale. Additionally, all private schools waived their admissions fees for these events.



## Student Suggestions DELIVERED TO WHITE HOUSE

What would you do if you were elected as the next President of the United States? Well, the kindergarten students at Nassakeag Elementary School were happy to share their answers after working on a book they called "The Obama Book."

"This November, Americans made history by electing the first African-American president," stated Ms. Wood. "I was really impressed with some of the ideas that the students came up with to help wish him luck in his new role...I was really impressed with some of the ideas that the students came up with."

The book, which includes a cover design by kindergartener Jillian Culaci, included a story from each student if they were the next president, and a picture of the child. The students recently shared their tips, which include: make sure the flag is safe, stop car crashes, and make sure that people ate healthy, with their sixth-grade buddies from Judy Larsen's class, before sending the book to President-elect Obama at the White House.

## Are YOU Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?

Fans of the popular television show "Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader" know just how challenging the questions posed on that competitive program can be. However, for the fifth-grade students at W.S. Mount Elementary School, those questions include many of the topics that are discussed daily in their classrooms. In an effort to reinforce the grade-level's history curriculum and in preparation for the New York State Social Studies Exam, the school recently coordinated their own version of the famous show.

Prior to the evening competition, the school's entire fifth grade took a 100-question social studies exam and the top student from each class qualified to compete as their class's representatives for a schoolwide version of the show. After the class competition, five students, Michael Incardona, Grace Zhang, Dominic Lamonica, Arman Esmaili, and Rebecca Schneider, emerged as the victors and made up the student team for the final contest. Volunteering to compete against the students in the last round was sixth-grade teacher, Jason Hugues, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary, Dr. Kenneth Bossert, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, Jeffrey Carlson, Board of Education member and W.S. Mount School Liaison, Carol Leister, and school principal, Nathalie Lilavois.

During the school's version of the program, the teams answered questions from a variety of categories, including presidents, the American Revolution, government, general terms, and the economy. The scores remained close during the entire battle, and the audience was impressed with each side's knowledge of the different areas.

"We felt this was a great way to not only prepare the students for the state exam, but also to make learning a fun experience," stated fifth-grade teacher Stefanie Baldante. "We are truly grateful to the adults who volunteered to participate in the program...it truly shows how invested this district, its administration, and community members are in education and our children," added fifth-grade teacher Janet Von Bargaen.



## Big Win During Business Competition

Four teams comprised of business students, student government members, and Leaders of America club members from Ward Melville High School competed in the Business Plan Competition at Briarcliffe College in Patchogue.

In their first appearance ever in the contest, the Ward Melville teams won first and second place. Congratulations to the students and business teacher Ilene Littman on this accomplishment:

Zachary Baum, Lindsey Brekne, Ryan Maloney, and Adriel  
**Second Place and a cash prize of \$150**

Jeff Stern, Michael Prestia, and Jordan Feldstein  
**First Place and a cash prize of \$250**

All four Ward Melville teams –  
**Second Place Trophy for their school average score**

The second place trophy also recognizes Jonathan Corona, John Kelly Brekne, Zachary Herman, Aaron Lifton, and Max Tcherevik, who competed on the first place team.

## WMHS 2008 YEARBOOK STAFF WINS TOP HONORS

Ward Melville High School's yearbook has done it again! The 2008 yearbook, themed "Unscripted," received, for the third year in a row, the Gold All New York Rating for Best All-Around Yearbook in New York State. In addition to this award, the book of memories also received 19 gold, seven silvers and one bronze medals from the Empire State School Press Association.

On the national level, the book earned a First Class Honor Rating with a Mark of Distinction in Writing from the National Scholastic Press Association and is a Gold Medalist from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association with All-Columbian Honors in Concept.

In addition, the Invictus DVD yearbook was the only DVD yearbook to win the Gold/All New York Award for a DVD presentation in its first ever year.



## Drops for Relief

Even though the students do not yet meet the criteria for donating, sixth-grade students at Minnesauke Elementary School organized a school blood drive with Long Island Blood Services in order to do their part to help combat the shortage of blood donations across America.

Prior to the drive, representatives from the Long Island Blood Services visited the school's sixth-grade classes to teach the students about blood and blood transfusions. The students learned how blood circulates through the body, what blood is made of, and what makes an ideal blood donor. On the day of the drive, many of the sixth graders volunteered as "Little Doctors," and assisted with things as filling out their paperwork and serving much-needed post-donation water.

"Although we can't donate ourselves, it feels great to help during a blood drive because I know what is collected here will go to help people in need," said Matthew De Livero. "So many people would die each year if they couldn't get blood...I would donate in a minute if I could," added sixth grader Jonathan Corona.

The Minnesauke blood drive collected a total of 21 pints of blood.



# Where in the World?

Seventh and eighth-grade students at R.C. Murphy Junior High School put their geography skills to the test when they participated in the National Geography Bee this January. The first round of the competition took place in the grades' social studies classes and the winner from each class was invited to participate in the final schoolwide contest. A total of 26 students participated in this round.

As the questions grew increasingly difficult, two students emerged as victorious and made it to the Championship Round. In a very tight and well-matched competition, seventh grader Henry Lane and eighth grader Tracy Wong battled back and forth. With the correct answer of "The Aztecs," Henry was crowned the winner and qualified to take a written geography exam in hopes of advancing to the New York State portion of the finals.



## Dreams Shared at Gelinas

In celebration of the district's diversity day program and keeping with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s mission, seventh-grade students at P.J. Gelinas Junior High School took to the stage in the school's auditorium to participate in the school's 11<sup>th</sup> Annual "I Have A Dream" Oratory Contest.

The program, which was coordinated by social studies teacher Louis Laird, called for students to finish the sentence "I have a dream..." and share what their hopes and dreams are. Fourteen students were selected to share their essays with their peers during a grade-level assembly program. A wish to cleanse the world from the ravages of war, desires to become a diplomat, and hopes for the economic crisis to be eradicated echoed throughout the auditorium. Seventh-grader Alan Wei, who dreams of an end of the war abroad, stated, "I believe that this is not only my dream...but it represents the aspirations of others."

In addition to the students' speeches, members of the school's ninth-grade chamber choir performed several songs, and students Haley Gillan and Katherine Sweeney shared a poem entitled, "Underneath We're All the Same."

The winners of this year's contest were Jessica Carpenter (first place), Gabriel Nekrutman (second place), and William Spitz (third place). Each participant was presented with a commemorative certificate and the top three were also given trophies.

## Donating Books, Changing Lives

After receiving a special visit from Kenya native, Oliver Mashaka, and hearing how children in that country are not afforded the same type of education as Americans, the students in Colleen Maier's class at Arrowhead Elementary School became involved in a unique community service project.

Mr. Mashaka, who visited the school on International Human Rights Day, spoke with the school's sixth graders and members of the JUSTICE Club about Kenya, the schools in the region, and how books are very rare and seen as being precious objects. Following his visit and in hopes of building up one Kenya school's library, Ms. Maier's class rallied their peers together and coordinated a weeklong book drive. As English is the official language of Kenya, Arrowhead's student-body knew that the children from across the globe would appreciate the new books.

"Each year the sixth-grade classes engage in several community service projects," stated Ms. Maier. "They were extremely excited about this one as they felt a strong connection to the cause after meeting Mr. Mashaka. This was also a terrific way for the lessons on Africa to come alive for the students."

During the event, students in all grades graciously donated gently used storybooks and four girls from Ms. Maier's class volunteered to separate them by reading level and box them for delivery. More than 40 boxes of books were received during the drive and, with the help of Ms. Maier and Arrowhead's Math, Science, and Technology teacher Chris Maffia, they were sorted by sixth graders Keira Gavan, Nicole Scott, Joanna Szymanski, and Gabriella Benedicto.



## Making Mornings *More Aerobic*



With the help of parent volunteer and Fitness Together gym owner Jen Lang, students at Setauket Elementary School are warming up their muscles and learning how to incorporate physical activities into their daily lives. Through the school's fitness initiative called Setauket Sunrise Fitness Workshop Program,

students in kindergarten through sixth grade are invited to come to school early two days a week and participate in a variety of exercise activities.

Each time a student attends the program they are given a ticket; for every ten tickets the students are able to cash them in for foot charms that they can attach to a bracelet. In addition to the morning program, the school has brought back its monthly fitness calendar and includes a healthy tip of the week in the morning announcements.

The program, which started in November, runs before school each Wednesday and Thursday. The school hopes to expand the workshops in the spring to include two after-school times.

## Ward Melville Students Recognized by 2008 Jostens/Adobe Design Contest

Ward Melville High School students Justin Suazo, Kathryn Kram, and Cassandra Lam recently received Honorable Mentions in the 2008 Jostens/Adobe Yearbook Design Contest. Judges recognized 23 middle and high school students across the nation for their creativity in yearbook design.

"When I heard that we won this award I felt so overwhelmed that both Jostens and Adobe recognized our art on a national level," stated Justin Suazo. "Especially because we stay so long after school and work so hard. It really helps to keep me inspired and want to keep creating designs."



## Making Fitness a Family Affair

Through their participation in the school's Fitness and Nutrition (FAN) bag pilot program, second-grade students at Minnesauke Elementary School are learning that the life skills emphasized in their character education lessons go hand in hand with physical activity and healthy eating. The initiative, which was created by health teacher Kristina Fiore-Rosenfeld to increase families' awareness of their child's fitness and nutrition needs, enables students to "adopt" a FAN bag for the weekend.



"Fitness education really begins at home," stated Ms. Fiore-Rosenfeld. "In the fight against childhood obesity, parents are the number one line of defense. We hope that the FAN bags will encourage families to come together and enjoy a fun physical activity together."

Each of the fourteen bags includes one main fitness activity, as well as several smaller fitness activities relating to the life skill being emphasized. For example, the bags on flexibility include two books on the topic, a yoga kit, and pedometers. Additional skills include friendship, organization, patience, perseverance, problem solving, and sense of humor.

This initiative was funded with the help of the school's Site-Based Team.

## Coats & Coins Collected During the Holidays

Positive character traits have been on display at Nassakeag Elementary School. With the help of teacher Debra Cocco, the school's fifth-grade students conducted a three-week coat drive for the less fortunate in Suffolk County. As a result of the generosity of the school community, the fifth graders collected more than 350 coats and other outdoor apparel.



Through an interschool project, Nassakeag students also raised funds to bring a bit of holiday cheer to a troop of soldiers serving in Afghanistan. Ward Melville High School eleventh graders Laura Yasson, Kristen Davies, Chloe Martirano, and Matt Kerner, along with their guidance counselor, Barbara O'Leary, coordinated a schoolwide collection drive for U.S. army soldier and Three Village alumnus, Greg Holownia, and enlisted the student council at Nassakeag to help collect funds to ship the packages. With the help of student council advisors Adele Gibbons and Robbin Teitelbaum and the building's Shared Decision-Making Team, the school participated in a "Postage for Patriots" drive.

"We really wanted to bring a piece of home to Greg and the men and women in his troop," stated Laura. "We hope that these packages will bring a smile to their faces this holiday."

In the months leading up to the holiday season, the high schoolers sent packages to the troop and received correspondence from the servicemen and women.

## Witnesses to History

As the words to "Preserve, Protect, and Defend," our country reverberated over the grounds of the nation's capital this January 20<sup>th</sup>, students throughout the district paused with their fellow Americans to be a part of history and watch as the nation's first African-American president was sworn in. As President-elect Barack Obama became the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, students and their teachers tuned in and watched the historic inauguration ceremony.

"Today's inauguration is ripe with symbolism," stated R.C. Murphy Junior High School Social Studies Chairperson John Andruszkiewicz. "On the day after we celebrate the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., our nation is swearing in our first African-American president. It is amazing to look back and see how far we have come."

As a special tribute to the nation, students at R.C. Murphy Junior High School lent their voices and sang a moving rendition of the National Anthem and *God Bless America*. Additionally, in each of the schools, teachers used this momentous occasion as a teaching moment and incorporated the event into their history lessons.

## Ward Melville Presents The Secret Garden

Ward Melville High School's Music Department and the Ward Melville Players proudly presented *The Secret Garden* as this year's school musical. As the lights went down on opening night, the auditorium's stage was transformed into a vine-covered garden and the audience embarked on a captivating journey with a young girl named Mary Lennox.



The play, which is a musical written by Marsha Norman and Lucy Simon and based on the novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett,



tells the story of Mary, who is sent to live in England with her uncle following the death of her parents in a cholera outbreak in India. There, she brings to life not only a neglected garden, but also all of those who surround her.

Approximately 200 Ward Melville High School students were involved in this production on stage, off stage, and in the pit. They rehearsed for months before the play's debut and performed nearly flawless shows for three evening performances before packed crowds, and left the audiences hoping next year's production would be as wonderful. Additionally, the talented student-actors performed a special show for the district's fifth graders and conducted a question and answer session. Prior to seeing the play, the students had learned about the original novel from their teachers and school librarians.

# Seven Seniors Sign Letters of Intent

After demonstrating a high level of athletic talent and academic excellence during their high school career, seven Ward Melville High School seniors have been selected by top institutions of higher education to continue their academic journey on their campuses this September. Additionally, by signing National Letters of Intent with these schools, the students will be afforded the opportunity to continue their athletic journey on one of the schools' sports teams.

"Congratulations are in order for not only our students but also their parents and coaches, who continue to support our student-athletes," stated Executive Director of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Athletics Don Webster. "I look forward to reading about your accomplishments in the future and hearing about your successes."

The district wishes the following seniors the best of luck next year:

- Mark Brode – Syracuse University (Boys Soccer)**
- Chelsea DeVerna – SUNY Albany (Girls Soccer)**
- Maggie DeVerna – SUNY Albany (Girls Soccer)**
- Jennifer Granger – University of Notre Dame (Girls Lacrosse)**
- Makenzie Hommel – Duke University (Girls Lacrosse)**
- Kerry Kresse – Stony Brook University (Girls Lacrosse)**
- Steven Matz – Coastal Carolina University (Baseball)**



## FENCING TEAM WINS 100 CONSECUTIVE MEETS

On December 16th, 2008, the Ward Melville High School Girls Varsity Fencing team won its 100th consecutive duel meet and are continuing to succeed. The streak began during the 2000-2001 season, and to date is helping the team work towards their eighth straight undefeated season.

The 100 consecutive victories not only sets a record locally but also breaks the New York State record of 98 consecutive wins previously held by Coach Jeff Wolfe's team from Brentwood High School. In addition to this record, the girls team has won seven consecutive Suffolk County titles and all six of Long Island's titles. Student-athletes from previous seasons were recruited by some of the top colleges across the nation, including Cornell, Columbia, University of Pennsylvania, Stanford, Notre Dame and Harvard, and are still representing Ward Melville in the NCAA.

"I am extremely proud of these accomplishments, which have been achieved through three generations of Ward Melville fencers," stated coach Jennie Salmon. "Their success is a direct result of hard work, determination, and a team spirit that has been passed down successfully over the years. This milestone could not have been achieved without the unwavering support of the entire athletic staff at Ward Melville High School. It was truly a team effort."

## COUNTY TITLE STAYS AT WARD MELVILLE

For the 17<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Ward Melville High School Girls Swimming and Diving Team have been named Suffolk County Champions. The team, which is comprised of 21 swimmers, practices under the guidance of head coach Chris Gordan.

"This outstanding record is a true testament to the dedication of our coaching staff and the students' perseverance," stated Executive Director of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Athletics Don Webster. "It is one that brings tremendous pride to the school and entire Three Village community."

In addition to this tremendous feat, a record number of swimmers were selected to compete at the New York State level. Congratulations to the following student-athletes:

- Kim Carballeira**
- Kate Conrad**
- Taylor DaSilva**
- Jessica Fabrizio**
- Shannon Lampe**
- Megan Mullaney**
- Lauren Ouzounian**
- Corinne Vairo**

## Student-Composers Showcased at State Level

Out of a submission pool of 107, four talented Three Village student-composers were selected to feature their original pieces during the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Young Composer Honors Concert. These composers are W.S. Mount Elementary School students Gary Ge and Stephanie Chen and P.J. Gelin Junior High School students Kayla Benaburger and Madeleine Vaillancourt. Only 14 pieces were selected in this statewide search for compositional talent and achievement.



"We are very proud of the achievement of our young composers," stated Three Village Central School District Student Composition Program Director Dr. Daniel Deutsch. "Each one of their pieces is compelling in a unique way. With more than 100 submissions from across the state, it is a very high honor to be selected. The conference events provide an exciting learning opportunity for the students. They get to work with excellent professional composers and also given the opportunity to meet their peers from the rest of New York State."

The concert was held in Rochester, New York, parallel to the 2008 All-State Winter Conference. At the conference, the students participated in composition workshops and seminars with prominent professional composers, including Pulitzer Prize-winning Composer-in-Residence Paul Moravec. Additionally, NYSSMA President Susan Weber presented the young composers with plaques honoring their achievement.

In addition to the four students selected to showcase their pieces, several Three Village students received the distinction of honorable mention. Congratulations to these students, Kristina Chu (Nassakeag Elementary School), Sabrina Ferretti (Setauket Elementary School), Peter Chiang (P.J. Gelin Junior High School), Andrew Wang (R.C. Murphy Junior High School), and Anita Fei (Ward Melville High School), whose compositions were reviewed more than once and were top contenders for inclusion in the Young Composer Honors Concert.

# STAMPING OUT SMOKING

The number of dangers and health concerns smokers can face are astronomical. In an effort to help better inform their peers, teachers, and other adults about the hazards cigarettes can cause, tenth-grade students from Maureen Kost's class at Ward Melville High School coordinated an informational event in celebration of The Great American Smoke Out.

Prior to the day, the students learned about quality research, how to find health information on different topics, and announced the upcoming Smoke Out over the school's public address system. Additionally, they created material to display during the event, including a three-foot-tall replica cigarette and handouts.

During the school's lunch periods and while standing before a display that included an actual blackened lung and a spooling information video, the student presenters shared a newsletter they created on the topic of smoking and encouraged students to sign a banner to symbolize their pledge to be smoke free. Additionally, sponsor sheets to sign were available for individuals wishing to help someone quit smoking.

In addition to their project for The Great American Smoke Out, members of Ms. Kost's class also made presentations during their lunch periods on stress and depression, as well as one in honor of World AIDS Day.



## When Fibbing Takes You to Broadway

The creativity and imagination of R.C. Murphy Junior High School eighth grader Amy Zhu ran wild when she put pen to paper and entered the Wicked Writing Contest sponsored by *Newsday* and the Broadway show *Wicked*. The contest



challenged students to take a current fairytale and either tell it from another point of view, change it, or pick up where the story left off. Amy's submission, which was called "Fibber," was a continuation of the famous tale of Pinocchio and how he could not stop lying. As a result of her hard work and inventive story, Amy was named a runner-up in the contest and awarded a once-in-a-lifetime prize.

Amy and the rest of her English class, taught by Jacqueline Pardi, were invited into New York City where they had the chance to meet David Cote, the companion book author; Winnie Holzman, the playwright; David Stone, the producer of the Broadway show *Wicked*; and Stephan Schwartz, the play's music producer. During the meeting, the guests of honor listened as the professionals spoke about how they translated the book into a musical and shared some insight into the meanings behind the musical. Additionally, the students had a chance to ask any questions they had about the play, Broadway, or the music profession.

## Students Dig Into Social Studies Lessons

As an introduction to a social studies lesson on Native Americans, the seventh-grade students at P.J. Gelinis Junior High School rolled up their sleeves and participated in a hands-on lesson.

The students, with the help of their teachers, performed an in-class "archeological dig" as a way of introducing the Native American unit of the New York State syllabus. The students were effectively engaged in understanding through active learning, including handling and noting "artifacts," and predicting how premodern humans used them.

"This was an ideal discovery lesson, in which the students were taught the basic principles of archeology," stated Social Studies Chair Richard Romero.

## Kindergarten Registration for 2009-2010 School Year

The district offers a full day kindergarten program for district residents. In order to be admitted to kindergarten in September, a child must be five years of age on or before December 31 during the school year in which they enter kindergarten. A proof of residency (either a lease, deed, tax bill or signed contract) must be provided along with the child's original birth certificate, social security number, and a copy of their immunization records at the time of registration. Registration occurs daily at the Central Registration Office at the North Country Administration Center (100 Suffolk Avenue, Stony Brook) from 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-3:00 p.m.

This year's kindergarten screening program will take place on:

- Arrowhead:** April 30, May 1, & May 4
- Minnesauke:** April 24, April 29, & May 7
- Mount:** April 21, April 23, & April 28
- Nassakeag:** April 17, May 20, & May 21
- Setauket:** May 8, May 11, & May 12

Children must be registered with the Central Registration office prior to kindergarten screening. For more information about the registration process and the immunizations required, please visit the district website, [www.threevillagesd.org](http://www.threevillagesd.org), and reference page 18 of the district calendar. Additional information can be obtained from the registrar's office at 730-4555.

### TAX CODE - 635

When filing your State Income Tax Form, please be certain to fill in the Three Village Central School District Tax Code number (635) in the appropriate space provided. School aid will be affected if the school district or code is incorrect or missing. You must enter the name and code number of the public school district where you were a resident on December 31, 2008. This information applies even if you were temporarily absent, if the school your child attended was not in your school district, or if you did not have children attending school.

### Calling All Alumni

Ward Melville High School's Alumni Committee is looking for information on past graduates as they work toward selecting honorees for this year's distinguished alumni program. For information about the program or to nominate someone for this honor, please visit the district's website, click on the Ward Melville High School button, and follow the links.

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

*President:* John K. Diviney

*Vice President:* David A. Micklos

*Trustees:* Jonathan Kornreich; Carol Leister; Frank McIntosh; Diane Peritore; Glen T. Whitney

*Superintendent of Schools:* Ralph P. Ferrie, Ed. D.