



THE STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT



MARCHING FALCONS

to Represent NY in D.C.

Six-Time Marching Band Champs will Parade in Washington on July 4th

The Deer Park High School Marching Falcons, under the direction of Tammy Cotrone and Jaimee Cilla, have been selected to represent the state of New York in the 2008 National Independence Day Parade in Washington, D.C. on July 4th. The Marching Falcons have been the USSBA State Champions for the past six years and will join government officials, military units, sponsored floats, and other specialty outfits in this national event.

The United States Department of the Interior and National Park Service, along with the National Selection Committee, chose Deer Park High School based on their review of video and audio tapes, recommendations of state music officials, past achievements, and current competition ratings.

The Marching Falcons will parade on historical Constitution Avenue in front of an anticipated audience of 450,000 spectators and participate in the laying of an Official Military Wreath at Arlington National Cemetery. The traditional parade will be a reflection of many American patriotic themes, historical and present, but the major emphasis in 2008 will be the "Salute to America's Greatest Generation."

If you wish to support the Deer Park Marching Falcons' participation in this national honor, please send donations to the attention of Lisa Saladino, Parent Booster Club President, at 128 Villa Avenue, Deer Park, NY 11729 and make checks payable to DPHSMBPC (Deer Park High School Marching Band Parent Club).

15 EARN AP HONORS

Fifteen students at Deer Park High School have earned the designation of AP Scholar by the College Board in recognition of their exceptional achievement on the college-level Advanced Placement (AP) program exams.

The College Board's AP Program offers students the opportunity to take challenging college-level courses while still in high school, and to receive college credit, Advanced Placement, or both for successful performance on the AP Exam. Students at Deer Park High School took their AP Exams in May 2007 after completing their courses. The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on students' performance on the AP Exams and Deer Park students were among the top ranked.

Alexander W. qualified for the AP Scholar with Distinction Award by earning an average grade of at least 3.5 out of 5 on all AP Exams taken. Three students, Christopher D., Melissa E. and Lauren S., were all named AP Scholars with Honors by earning an average of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken. Finally, an impressive 11 students were recognized with the AP Scholar Award by completing three or more AP Exams with grades of 3 or higher. They are Nicholas A., Molly C., Nicole Dettling, William Florio, Julisa Gonzalez, Wai-Jee H., Tae Ken K., Michael L., Eric M., Kristen M., and Michael R.

Deer Park Union Free School District
Deer Park, New York 11729

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A Message from *Your Board of Education President*

Hi Everyone,

I want to first send out my thanks for all the kind words, phone calls and emails received over the last few months regarding the direction of the Deer Park School District. We have a wonderful community filled with school spirit and pride that is touching so many of us. There are many great things happening around us.

To the students, what a wonderful first half of the school year you are having! I have been receiving compliments from many different people, from politicians to members of the media. They all feel the positive change you have inspired. I have always been proud of our children, and it's nice to know that people outside of Deer Park are realizing our potential for success. Their dedication, respect, and caring is appreciated and we urge you to keep up the hard work. **Remember, "Everybody's gotta learn sometime."** – *Beck*.

I want to also thank our administrators and teachers, who are providing a continuity that is remarkable and such a benefit to our students. In particular, I want to commend the outstanding job our building principals have done. The Board appreciates the support they have received from our parents. We take very seriously who we appoint to run our school buildings and we feel we have a responsible group who work only in the best interests of our children.

Last but not least, our parents, who have such a great stake in all of this, I thank you for all that you do to prepare your children for current and future successes.

Communicating the Issues

A new Board of Education website is completed and will launch very shortly. We are doing this mainly because of the changes in how we need to communicate to you. Let's face it, times have changed. It is no longer easy for the average parent or community member to attend a Board meeting, yet it is still important for all of us to remain cognizant of the issues and become involved.

Once again I ask that you participate in what I will term "THE CALL TO ACTION" program. If you sign up for this program via our BOE webpage link, when the Board needs your support with an issue facing our District, we will send out an eblast informing you about the issue, it's ramifications to us and how you can help. In most cases you will be asked to send an email and make a phone call to our local representatives asking them to support the best interests of their constituents (us) over those of special interest groups that often approach them for support. Don't worry we will have you prepared and this should take no more than two minutes of your time.

Around the District:

New bleachers and a refinished floor highlight gymnasium renovations at the high school, and I urge you to please attend

our athletic events and see the work that has been done, while admiring our fine student-athletes. They practice so hard and really appreciate your support. There has been much work accomplished over the summer within the District, from changes in administration to facility maintenance. I am proud of our buildings and grounds team for caring as much as they do. You can see their dedication in the work they are performing.

The energy audit is complete. It's great stuff and the beginning of a journey that will one day change the way we use and produce energy within our school district community. It's time we start to look toward the future in securing a clean and green school district. It is the right thing to do for our children's health, our local environment and our energy budget. I will need your support as a community, your ideas and your commitment when the time comes to move forward.

The budget process has begun, and starting in February we will be meeting regularly at the BOE room to discuss the 2008-2009 budget. You are all welcome to attend those meetings.

Thank you and God bless,

Dennis P. Ryan, *President*
631-274-8891

Helping *Buddies* in Need

Deer Park High School recently held a Backpack Buddies Fundraising Spaghetti Dinner, sponsored by the Chartwells Dining Service. All proceeds went directly to two noble charitable organizations: Backpack Buddies Food Pantry



Program of Suffolk County and Habitat for Humanity, a charity for which Deer Park High School students help build homes for families in need across Long Island.

During the dinner the Deer Park High School Women's Choir entertained the guests. Members of the Deer Park High School Community Service Club provided free face painting and temporary tattoos (pictured).

BOARD OF ED LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

The Deer Park Board of Education is launching a new website to enhance communication with the community. Committee reports, information about the Board, budget process, capital projects, schedules of meetings, and government links are available on the new site which can be accessed on the District homepage at www.deerparkschools.org. The Board website site can also be accessed directly at www.deerparkboe.com. Residents can email Board members on any District issue. Visitors may also sign up for the "A CALL TO ACTION" program. When the Board wishes to communicate an important issue, they will send out "A Call to Action" eblast that includes information on the issue and how residents can get involved.

All District residents are encouraged to sign up to receive this communication. There is no obligation and participation is not subject to junk mail or spam as a result of your participation.



Three Honored by

NATIONAL MERIT CORP. FOR EXCELLENCE

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation has recognized three Deer Park High School seniors for excellence. Kristen M. has been named a Semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship program; Tae Ken K. has been named a National Merit Commended student; and Allison N. was named a Scholar-Finalist of the National Hispanic Scholarship Program.

Kristen has been recognized as a semifinalist based on her superior performance on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). She is one of approximately 16,000 students, or one-third of 50,000 high-scoring entrants. As a semifinalist Kristen represents the top half of one percent of United States high school seniors and is included in the highest scoring entrants in New York State. Finalists for the National Merit Scholarship will be announced this winter, with winners to be announced in the spring.

Tae Ken has also been recognized by the program as a National Merit Commended Student. More than 1.4 million juniors in nearly 21,000 high schools entered the 2008 National Merit Program and Kim is one of 34,000 students in the top five percent nationwide who received letters of commendation for his outstanding PSAT results. Tae Ken is also the recipient of the Bausch & Lomb Honorary Science Award from the University of Rochester for his outstanding performance in science.



Congratulations to (L-R) Allison, a Scholar-Finalist of the National Hispanic Scholarship Program; Tae Ken has been named a National Merit Commended student; and Kristen, a Semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship program.

Allison is a Scholar-Finalist for the National Hispanic Scholarship Program. She is recognized as one of approximately 3,300 of the highest scoring students from a nationwide total of 196,000 Hispanic high school students who took the PSAT. As a result of her achievements, the College Board will identify and recommend her to postsecondary educational institutions.

Deer Park congratulates its successful seniors and wishes them continued success in their final year as Deer Park High School students.

UPGRADING TECHNOLOGY

This fall, the District's Management Information Systems (MIS) Department deployed new technology resources and a comprehensive suite of applications, along with training and support opportunities for the District's students, teachers, administrators, and support personnel.

New hardware and software are being used at all schools. New computers replaced obsolete equipment in the computer labs of the John Quincy Adams and May Moore Primary Schools. Other computers were upgraded with RAM (Random Access Memory), new operating systems, and applications – including those in the classrooms at Deer Park High School. Xerox copiers were integrated into the District's network, allowing them to replace obsolete copiers and printers. New software applications were added to student, teacher, and office computers, including an enhanced, Web-based automated library system. SMARTBoards, which are

interactive whiteboards used by teachers and students, have been placed in all schools.

Additionally, the MIS Department continues to instruct personnel in the many application resources available in Deer Park Schools for the purposes of improving student learning outcomes, providing enhanced services, and ensuring a higher level of District productivity and management.

Correction:

In the fall edition of *The Standard*, Kristen Calder was incorrectly identified as seventh in the Class of 2008 academic ranking. Kristen is actually ranked sixth. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

A TEACHER AND SERVICEMAN HONORS DISTRICT

Robert Frost Middle School teacher John Heeg, a serviceman with the New York National Guard in Iraq, publicly honored the Deer Park administration and Board of Education members on behalf of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. Mr. Heeg presented Superintendent of Schools Elizabeth Marino; Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, & Professional Development Eva Demyen; and Robert Frost Middle School Principal James Cummings with the Patriot Award.



Praising the District for its strong support system, Mr. Heeg expressed his love and pride for Deer Park, describing the endless care packages

and letters sent to him from his students and co-workers. Eager to be back in the classroom and reconnect with his students, he admitted having a greater appreciation for his work and family at Deer Park Middle School since being overseas.

In recognition for his courageous efforts to protect and safeguard the community and country, Ms. Marino (pictured left) presented Mr. Heeg (right) with a certificate of recognition on behalf of the entire Deer Park school community.

Academic, Extracurricular Champions

Once again the staff of Deer Park High School honored its best and brightest in their respective disciplines as the school hosted its biannual "Breakfast of Champions." The event is held to honor the student who shines the most in a particular academic or extracurricular subject area. Each of the 16 students recognized, along with their families, were invited to a breakfast in the school library, where the nominating teacher or administrator said some kind words about why that student was selected.

This winter's champions are pictured being congratulated by Superintendent of Schools Elizabeth Marino (standing, far right) and Assistant Principal Stephen Moran (standing, far left), coordinator of the event. The champions are (standing, left to right) Isaih C. – Athletics, Ian K. – Physical Education, Sean G. – Business, Thomas E. – Technology, Marga D. – Art, Carl R. – Guidance, Tymell W. – Math, Allissa M. – Science, (seated, left to right) Janelle G. – Performing Arts, Gianni C. – ELA, Arsala B. – World Languages, Anna C. – Social Studies, Matthew E. – Science, and Marcus J. – Special Education. Missing from photo: Nazmul K. – ESL.



eCommerce Plan Wins *Best in NY State*

Deer Park High School eCommerceEd and Small Business Management students, known as "Binger's Bunch," under the guidance of teacher Nancy Binger, have won the award for "Best Written Business Plan in New York State" for their ScoresUp websites. Both of Ms. Binger's eCommEd classes, comprised of a combined total of 100 students, received the coveted honor for running and maintaining the live District websites based on their detailed plan of action for a successful business.

Both business plans were described by the judges as "well researched" and "professionally written," with very specific task descriptions and objectives. The students' plan enables the two e-businesses to operate with relative ease and thrive, with consistent performance assessment and tools for the sites/businesses to grow. The latest accolade for "Binger's Bunch" places them in strong candidacy for the annual ScoresUp Site of the Year Awards.

STUDENTS MONITOR COSMIC ACTIVITY through BNL Project



Jack Steffens, an instructor from Stony Brook University, identifies the internal workings of a forward radar detector for these Deer Park students.

to a cosmic ray analytical device on loan from BNL. It is currently the location for one of the data collecting stations in the area for the Mixed Apparatus for Radar Investigation of Atmospheric Cosmic-Rays of High Ionization (MARIACHI).

The students built a detector station that works in tandem with detector stations at Stony Brook University and Brookhaven National Lab. Deer Park students built detectors that catalogue and count cosmic particles, and most critical, cosmic ray showers, which enter our atmosphere and reach the surface of the earth.

Deer Park High School Advanced

Placement Physics teacher Joseph Sundermier and Chemistry teacher Theodore Smirlis have been instrumental in bringing this program to Deer Park High School. Deer Park students have been exposed to Long Island's leading scientists and researchers, such as Senior BNL Physicist Helio Takai, who has been at the forefront of developing these complex programs that utilize student scientists.

"We decided we would involve students in research projects to explain the physics and how the equipment works," said Mr. Takai. "We have developed experiments and demonstrations together with teachers and have incorporated students into the research. The results have been a very good experience."

Technicians from Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) conducted a hands-on training session for Deer Park High School students who are enrolled in chemistry and physics and are actively taking part in BNL's modern physics experiments.

Deer Park High School has been home

Certified Mediators

Twenty-five students and eight teachers participated in a new Conflict Resolution and Mediation program at Robert Frost Middle School. Each participant was trained in three two-hour sessions during the school day and received a certificate as a trained conflict mediator upon completion. The purpose of the program is to teach students on how to assist their peers in working through problems that are so often an issue during the middle school years. Students learned the life skills necessary to peacefully solve these problems.



Rising to the Challenge

Deer Park High School Senior James P. is the proud recipient of the Suffolk County Youth Bureau's "Celebrating Youth" Achievement Award. Presented by Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy, James was selected for this honor based on his demonstration of growth and personal achievement through adversity and challenges he has met and conquered during his life. Deer Park High School Assistant Principal Mary Reynolds credits James'



success to, "his positive outlook, focus on the tasks before him, and the constant support system of his family who has stood by him every step of the way." Ms. Reynolds (pictured second from right) along with Deer Park High School Guidance Counselor Noel Skelton (far right), who nominated James for the award, are seen here congratulating James with his proud parents, James and Colleen. James excels with an overall 96 academic average and was a recent "Student of the Month" selection.

SHARING Cultures and Delicacies

John Quincy Adams Elementary School second grade students hosted an International Luncheon to celebrate the holiday season. The American flag anchored a hanging classroom display of student-created international flags, each representing a piece of the class' diverse heritage.

Students were engaged in a multidimensional cultural curriculum in class, reading literature, examining geography, and designing artwork pertaining to their country of descent. The luncheon brought together these lessons by acquainting the students with the various traditions that exist among the families of their classmates.

Each parent and student prepared a special holiday dish; either one handed down from generation to generation, or simply a holiday favorite. To kick off the International Luncheon, each student prepared a presentation and spoke about their dish, explaining why it is a tradition in their family and illustrating the information they learned about their country of origin.

Second grade teachers Kathy Fontaine and Anne Isip created the program to help students identify with and celebrate the many different cultures that exist among them and other members of the Deer Park community.



Ms. Fontaine's second grade class proudly displays their flag artwork of the world during the International Luncheon.

Exploring Traditions through *Music, Art & Technology*

Fourth graders at John F. Kennedy Intermediate School learned about the cultures of Peru and Trinidad through a musical education program that brought together the history, literature, and arts of these diverse countries.

Long Island Traditions, an organization that honors cultural traditions through historic preservation, research, and education in the arts, spearheaded this cultural campaign in accordance with Deer Park's Fine and Performing Arts Department and a grant provided by the Rockefeller Foundation's New York State Music Fund. Deer Park is the first and only school district in Suffolk County to utilize Long Island Traditions to create this type of program for its students.

A multidisciplinary program, students learned how to compose and perform music unique to the area, and learned about the history, economic systems, and geography, as well as Peruvian folksongs. They also played steel drums from Trinidad. Classroom workshops welcomed performers, artists, and Long Island Traditions educators. During these interactive sessions students composed traditional music from both countries, created art projects, and enhanced their literary skills by reading and writing about each country's past.



Fourth grade students met Theo Torres (center) and examined his traditional Peruvian instruments.

Incorporating tradition and technology, students also archived the information they learned, highlighted a journalistic component, and through podcasts shared their experiences with others outside the classroom.

In addition to the fourth grade program, two assemblies were held for the entire school, one wherein students enjoyed live Peruvian cultural performances. Displaying a customary poncho, singer Theo Torres introduced the traditional dance techniques and lyrics of Peruvian songs and inspired students to sing and clap along during the first concert. A Steel Sensations concert was held later in the fall to introduce students to Caribbean Music.

RECERTIFICATION UPDATE

The residency recertification process for the freshman class at Deer Park High School continues. To date, 51 students who have been identified as non-residents have been discharged. The program was initiated following growing concerns of non-residents benefitting from taxpayer funded services. To report a suspected non-resident attending a Deer Park school, please call 274-4134.

TRANSLATORS NEEDED

The District is seeking volunteers from the community to serve as translators for school-related correspondence and/or community outreach. Speakers/translators of Spanish, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Farsi, Turkish and other languages are needed. If you wish to help on an as-needed basis, please contact Gina Palasciano at 631-274-4112, or through e-mail at palasciano.g@deerparkschools.org.

Unearthing the Past, Preserving the Present

Deer Park May Moore Elementary School fused the past and the present during a time capsule dedication. A time capsule securely placed behind the walls of the school was retrieved last year as part of the school's 50th anniversary celebration. Present May Moore students examined the contents of the capsule, which was created by May Moore students in 1956, the school's inaugural year.

Students reviewed photos taken from the capsule and read student letters and articles written in 1956. Continuing the tradition, current May Moore students created documents and photo collages of their own, reflecting the present culture and

time period they are living in.

The program continued its cycle when the 1956 time capsule was placed back into its original position behind the bricks of May Moore and a new niche beside the original was carved for a new time capsule. Kindergarten, first and second grade classes cheered their classmates along as they sealed up the past and present.

May Moore's custodian, affectionately known to the students and community as "Mr. Joe," donated the commemorative marble which reads "2006" and is displayed at the entrance of school. This acknowledges the 50-year mark when students began assembling the new capsule. Parent Joe M.



performed the masonry work with the help of the District's Buildings and Grounds Department. His daughters Isabella and Sophia are pictured here alongside the building's original cornerstone.

Accepting the Challenge

Students at Deer Park High School experienced Rachel's Challenge, a dynamic program that motivates positive changes in the way students treat one another. Inspired by Rachel Scott, the first person killed during the tragic shootings at Columbine High School eight years ago, this national effort emphasizes the kind acts she performed during her life and the contents of her diaries.



Students were engaged with powerful video and audio footage of Rachel's life and the Columbine tragedy. An interactive training session for students and teachers followed and was led by Jim May, a long time personal friend of the Scott family and part of the Rachel's Challenge team. Students were encouraged to reflect on the previous presentation and apply these lessons to their school and specific situations in their lives. At the culmination of the session, students 'accept' Rachel's Challenge by signing a banner (pictured) pledging to be open, honest, and respectful to their fellow classmates, demonstrating understanding and tolerance for each other's differences.

According to family members, positive open communication and a fostering of trust between classmates are character traits that epitomized Rachel Scott and how she lived and treated others.



Kids Get Crafty for the Holidays

John Quincy Adams School students cultivated their creativity by building crafty gingerbread houses this holiday season. Pictured above, students sculpted these edible treats, with each house illustrating its own unique characteristics. Prekindergarten students at Abraham Lincoln School recognized Hanukkah by lighting candles on the Menorah and singing traditional Jewish songs. Students were engaged through live instruments and learned numbers, shapes, colors, and smells. They also enjoyed potato latkes, as pictured to the right.



COACH LUKSIK'S LEGACY LIVES ON

Wrestling Room Dedicated in Late Deer Park Wrestling Coach's Honor

Deer Park's Alumni Wrestling Foundation, athletic department, administration, and community members came together for a night of athletic competition in honor of former Deer Park High School teacher and wrestling coach Ed Luksik.

After a long battle with cancer, Coach Luksik died on November 24th, but his presence will live on as the high school's wrestling room was dedicated in his honor. The Deer Park school and wrestling community were on hand for the dedication, as Mr. Luksik's family was presented with a commemorative plaque.

During Coach Luksik's 30-year tenure, Deer Park High School's wrestling squad won five league titles and the 1995 Suffolk County Class B Championship. In 1975, Coach Luksik was named Suffolk County Coach of the Year and won the County's Grand Master Wrestling Coach's Award in 1996. In 1998 Coach Luksik obtained the ultimate achievement, when he was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame for lifetime service.



Deer Park Athletic Director Anthony Amesti shows Angie Luksik a sign dedicating the high school wrestling facility in her late husband Ed Luksik's honor.

New Golf Facility

Deer Park's High School courtyard is home to a new golf practice facility. Complete with turf putting greens and driving cages, Deer Park's golf teams have an exclusive place to improve their game on school grounds.

The Deer Park School District is one of the few, if not the only District on Long Island to have this type of golf facility in a high school, and they have local orthodontist Dr. Scott Schwartz to thank for his generous donation. Dr. Schwartz (pictured right, cutting the ribbon) is a well-known member of the community who has worked on many of the smiles that lit up the golf courtyard at the dedication ceremony.

Josephine Calder, Deer Park Golf Team parent and President of the Deer Park Golf Association, was the driving force behind the initiative. Ms. Calder worked tirelessly with New York Custom Putting Greens to design and construct the practice facility.

Deer Park Board of Education President Dennis Ryan was present at the dedication ceremony, expressing thanks to Dr. Schwartz and Ms. Calder for their support of the District's athletic program. Ms. Calder acknowledged the valuable hands-on help of Mr. Ryan, and entire collaboration of the Board and district administration, including Administrator of Facilities & Operations Kirk Gostkowski, High School Principal Nanine Cuttitta and Athletic Director Anthony Amesti.

During a ribbon-cutting ceremony, Dr. Schwartz and members of the Varsity Boys and Girls and Junior Varsity Boys teams showcased their skills by taking the first practice putts on the new green.



School news and photos compiled by Terry Gilberti and Marissa Sanseverino.

Board of Education

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