

# YOUR SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKVILLE CENTRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

### January

22 Board of Education Meeting

### February

5 Board of Education Budget Work Session

17-21 Schools Closed—Mid Winter Recess

26 Board of Education Regular Meeting & Budget Work Session

## SSMS Students Honor Vets with “Take a Veteran to School Day”

On Friday, November 8th, South Side Middle School students and faculty took the opportunity to honor and show their appreciation for the brave men and women who have served in the armed forces and helped protect our freedom during “Take a Veteran to School Day.” During this event students had the opportunity to hear about the experiences of both combat veterans and those who served during times of peace from all branches of the military.

When asked why she thought this event was important for students, South Side Middle School Principal, Shelagh McGinn, said “We speak about how lucky we are to be able to live in the USA. I think it is really important that the students are able to see and meet the people who have made this possible. These veterans have preserved our freedoms, and I think hearing their stories firsthand has a positive influence on our students.”



## Intel Science Talent Search Semifinalist



*Pictured: SSHS science teacher Herb Weiss (L) and Matt Giovanniello*

Congratulations to Matt Giovanniello on being named a Semifinalist in the Intel Science Talent Search. His research project was titled: A Novel Approach for the Assessment and Individualized Treatment for Brain Injured Patients Using Proprietary Computer Algorithms. The semifinalists of the Intel Science Talent Search (Intel STS) 2014 were selected from among 1,794 entrants representing 489 high schools in 45 states, the District of Columbia, and seven overseas schools.

Matt will receive a \$1,000 award for his outstanding research. Additionally, to recognize excellence in teaching and school support of individual student research, South Side High School will also receive an award of \$1,000.

From the group of semifinalists, 40 finalists will be chosen to attend the Intel Science Talent Institute in Washington, DC from March 6–12, 2014. During their trip to Washington, these finalists will undergo further judging and share \$630,000 in awards.

# School Roundup

## COVERT

On November 29th, Covert held its annual Thanksgiving Day Feast in the gymnasium. Each student created a placemat with drawings and writings depicting the things that represent Thanksgiving and what they are thankful for. The children and adults of Covert ate together wearing their orange "Covert Rocks" t-shirts. The feast is a great opportunity for the parents, children, and staff to celebrate together and to realize how lucky we all are to be a part of an amazing school. The feast was also highlighted by the fourth grade canned food drive in which the students are taught the importance of philanthropy and gave the school a chance to help needy families within the community.



## HEWITT

Fifth grade students at Hewitt participated in their third annual Halloween Hop-A-Thon this year. Their goal this time was to raise money for a cause close to home; Island Harvest, a non-profit organization that feeds hungry families on Long Island.

Gregg Linker, a fifth grade teacher at Hewitt, began working with Island Harvest 12 years ago and organized a program in which fifth grade students become ambassadors from the school. When asked why she chose to donate the money from the Hop-A-Thon to Island Harvest this year, Ms. Linker said, "We chose to donate to Island Harvest last year after Hurricane Sandy. Island Harvest utilizes all donations locally and was even started by a woman from Rockville Centre." Ms. Linker went on to say, "The Hop-A-Thon is a fun way to get the children involved with community service. On a day when they go out into the community to get treats, they are also spending part of the day giving back to their community."



*Island Harvest Representative Elissa Weick and Hewitt Teacher, Gregg Linker, speak to students about what Island Harvest does.*

Students asked sponsors to make a pledge for each hop they completed and, in total, they were able to raise over \$3,100. According to Island Harvest representative, Elissa Weick, the money was used to purchase turkeys for the holiday season.

## RIVERSIDE



Riverside students celebrated the importance of Thanksgiving at their annual Sharing Feast on November 29th. During this event, all students gathered in the gymnasium to enjoy a feast prepared by parents and PTA. Kindergarten students made Pilgrim hats and Native American vests, and fifth grade students sat with their first grade buddies. The meal was served buffet style by members of the PTA and, as part of tradition, the kids colored on the paper that lined each table.

# School Roundup

## WATSON

On Wednesday, October 23, 2013, over 200 Watson Elementary students, their parents, and the entire faculty participated in the Math/Engineering/Enrichment Fair. Students got to enjoy an array of engineering challenges like the *Humpty Dumpty Egg Drop*, in which students designed clay coverings for eggs that would prevent their shells from cracking upon impact; the *Marshmallow Challenge*, where children worked together to build the tallest tower out of 20 pieces of spaghetti and one marshmallow; and *Float Your Boat*, in which students created boats out of aluminum foil, predicted how much weight their boats could hold, and then tested their hypotheses in a pool of water.

Additionally, stations were set up throughout the gymnasium to capture the students' creativity and natural inclinations to build and take things apart. The night flew by as students moved from station to station and were introduced to age appropriate engineering principles, along with complementary math, science and technology concepts.

Watson School would like to thank the Rockville Centre Education Foundation, as well as the Watson School PTA, for their funding to make these events possible.



## WILSON



In the Spirit of Thanksgiving, the Wilson Elementary School Student Government made a decision to help members of the Rockville Centre Community. Students in Kindergarten through fifth grade collected non-perishable food items that were picked up on Wednesday, November, 14th, by Mayor Murray and were distributed to those in need. Wilson students take pride in helping others and know the food will be put to good use. Our entire school community is thankful for the dedication and service to all the people of Rockville Centre from Mayor Murray and his staff.

## HIGH SCHOOL

Fourteen South Side High School research students submitted thirteen project papers to the Siemens Competition in Math, Science & Technology. The Siemens Competition recognizes the best and brightest young scientific minds in America. This year, roughly 2,440 students throughout the country registered to compete, spanning a wide range of topics from mathematics to all branches of science.

This prestigious competition has spotlighted the talents of many South Side students over the years. This year the following students participated in this celebrated competition:

Forrest Butensky, Elizabeth Davoli, Aliya Gottehrer Cohen, Jennifer Gentile, Matthew Giovanniello, Nassir Jones, Brittanie Joseph, Caroline Joyce, Thomas Keady, Max Kramer, Mairead Milan, Bridget McFadden, Brandon Prashad, and Justin Silverman.



*Pictured: Superintendent Willian Johnson, Mairead Milan, Caroline Joyce, Aliya Gottehrer Cohen, Bridget McFadden, Brandon Prashad, Matthew Giovanniello, Herb Weiss, Thomas Keady, Elizabeth Davoli, Forrest Butensky, Brittanie Joseph, Nassir Jones, Justin Silverman, BOE President Liz Dion*

## Three South Side High School Athletes Honored at the December 11th Board of Education Meeting

At the December 11<sup>th</sup> Board of Education meeting, three amazing athletes were recognized for their outstanding achievements during the fall season.

South Side High School Swimmer Georgianne Cushmore not only broke two of her own individual school records in the 50 and 100 yard freestyle, but also created a new school record when anchoring in the 200 Medley relay. In addition, she also managed to break a seven year-old school record by three full seconds with her lead-off in the 400 Freestyle Relay.

These relays helped South Side clench the Conference 2 Championship title and finish fifth overall at the Nassau County Championships. Georgianne also qualified for the New York State Federation Swim Meet in Ithaca, New York, where she competed in the 100 yard butterfly. Georgianne finished twenty-sixth overall, once again breaking her own personal record.

Thomas Germano, the starting goalie for the varsity boys' soccer team and this year's captain, led the team to another Nassau County Championship game and was named the game's Most Valuable Player. In addition, this year he earned All County, All State, and All Region classification for his level of intensity and play.

Cross Country Runner, Kieran McCarthy, is one of the top runners to ever participate in South Side Cross Country and presently ranks fourth on the all-time South Side record board. Kieran, who earned the title of Nassau County Champion this year as a junior, recently represented South Side at the NY State Championship held in Queensbury, NY. At that meet, Kieran broke his own personal record in a 3.1 mile race, crossing the finish line in a speedy 16 minutes and 17 seconds. He placed thirty-second in the State, first in Nassau County Class B, and fourth overall in Nassau County combining all classes.



*Pictured L to R: Superintendent of Schools William Johnson, Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics Carol Roseto, Georgianne Cushmore, Coach Rachel McShane, Thomas Germano, Coach Steve Kasajanski, Kieran McCarthy, Coach Chris Webster, and Board of Education President Liz Dion.*

## *Former Covert Principal Celebrates her 100th Birthday!*



*Mrs. Roth Celebrates her 100th Birthday*



*Mrs. Roth behind her desk at Covert Elementary School*

Leonora Roth, former Covert Elementary School Principal, turned a century old on January 11, 2014. Mrs. Roth began working in the District as a second grade teacher at Hewitt Elementary School in 1956. In 1970, she became the Principal of Covert and worked there until retirement in 1984, at the age of 70. If you'd like to contact Mrs. Roth please email [snurin@yahoo.com](mailto:snurin@yahoo.com) or send a letter to her at:

372 Central Park West  
Apt 2L  
Manhattan NY, 10025

## Three South Side High School Students Sign National Letter of Intent



*Rachel Marasco, Kayla Principato, and Maggie Cifarelli*

Three South Side High School seniors signed National Letters of Intent in November. Rachel Marasco will attend College of the Holy Cross for swimming; Kayla Principato will attend University of Denver for Volleyball; and Maggie Cifarelli will be attending Siena College for Lacrosse.

The National Letter of Intent (NLI) is a binding agreement between a prospective student-athlete and an NLI member institution. In this agreement, the prospective student-athlete agrees to attend the institution full-time for one academic year, and the institution agrees to provide athletics financial aid for one academic year.

## South Side High School Students Perform in All State Ensembles

NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association) provides individual music students and school ensembles, such as bands, orchestras, and vocal ensembles, the opportunity to be assessed by a trained adjudicator. Music literature in the NYSSMA Manual is divided into six levels of difficulty; Level VI being the most difficult. A seventh category is Level VI All State.

Five South Side High School students were selected to go to Rochester, NY and perform in All State Ensembles. Congratulations to the following students on being selected for this prestigious honor:



*Holiday sing along on steps of the convention center.*

Peri Bernstein, trumpet  
Taylor Levy  
Tristan MacAnaney  
Nic Marcotrigiano  
Leanna Paymar, clarinet

All State Wind Ensemble  
All State Mixed Chorus  
All State Mixed Chorus  
All State Mixed Chorus  
All State Symphonic Band



*All State Mixed Chorus*



*Taylor Levy, Nic Marcotrigiano, and Peri Bernstein*

## South Side High School presented with the Award of Excellence at the annual meeting of the Guild of IB Schools



South Side High School was recognized by the International Baccalaureate at the annual meeting of the Guild of IB Schools (GIBS). GIBS presented the Award of Excellence to South Side for its exemplary International Baccalaureate education, recognizing its open access policy and its service to member schools. Pictured with the award are Dr. Carol Burris, Principal, and John Murphy, Assistant Principal and IB Coordinator.



### BOARD OF EDUCATION

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### To All Rockville Centre School District Residents

If you believe that your school-age or preschool child may have a disability, please contact Mrs. Noreen Leahy, Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education, at (516)255-8928, or Dr. Orly Gadon, Chairperson of the Committee on Special Education/ Preschool Education at (516) 255-8942.

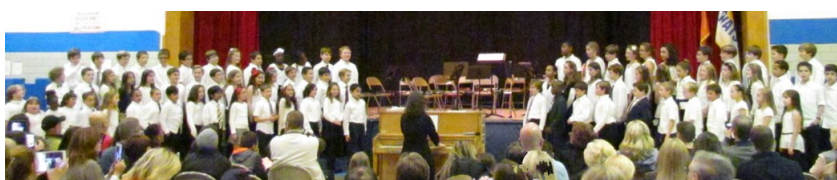
## iPad Rollout Begins at South Side Middle School!

On November 18th and 19th, iPads were distributed to South Side Middle School seventh graders to take home for the first time. This new program allows sixth and seventh graders in the Middle School to use the iPads as their own for the remainder of the school year.

Students will bring the devices to school each day to be used with District-approved applications in class (a full list of the apps can be found [here](#)). Some of the apps will take the place of textbooks, while others will be more interactive. The District's goal is to give students the 21st century tools they will need to be college and career ready in the future.

"This pilot isn't just about iPads, it's about giving our students access to a world of infinite information. It's about developing in our youngsters the 21st century skills of creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and communication that are going to prepare them for their next steps in college and careers. I'm really excited and thank the Board of Education, our superintendent, Dr. Johnson, the Middle School staff and administration and, ultimately this community for giving our kids this incredible opportunity," said Assistant Superintendent Chris Pellettieri.

iPad distribution for sixth grade students will take place on January 21st and 23rd. For more information, please visit the Middle School iPad page under web resources at [www.rvcschools.org](http://www.rvcschools.org), or by clicking [here](#).



The District has implemented a communication process for emergency notifications. School closings and other urgent messages will be sent through ConnectEd, a telephone and email communication system. Contact information on file for students and staff will be utilized for these notifications. Other community members who wish to receive District-wide messages should send an email with their name, phone number and/or email address to [connected@rvcschools.org](mailto:connected@rvcschools.org) or send a letter to the Business Office in the Administration Building at 128 Shepherd Street, Rockville Centre, NY 11570 requesting to be added to this messaging list. Parents who would like to change their contact information should contact the main office of their child's school.