

Copiague Connections

Issued by the Copiague Board of Education as an information service to taxpayers and parents



Copiague Public Schools

A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

www.copiague.k12.ny.us

FALL 2007 SECOND EDITION

HOMECOMING 2007

Sunny skies and a fall breeze provided the perfect setting for Homecoming. Proud community members, family, and friends lined the streets as the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Marching Band led the Homecoming parade along Great Neck Road.

School spirit was at an all-time high, as members of the Board of Education and administration marched side-by-side with students and staff. Student-designed floats added a personal touch to the parade. The cheerleaders could be heard loud and clear as they encouraged everyone to cheer for the Eagles, while the Step Dance Team demonstrated their unique dance steps with precision and style. This year's Grand Marshal was former high school Principal Michael Hodgkiss, who was joined by Hall of Achievement Inductees Sherri von Essen Casey (Class of 1969), Ronald M. Cherry (Class of 1974), Gregory J. Corrado (Class of 1975), Christopher M. Geackel (Class of 1982), and the family of Colonel James G. Tietjen (Class of 1970).

After the parade, it was on to the game, where a carnival-like atmosphere provided music for dancing, games, and food that everyone could enjoy. The bleachers were filled to capacity and it was standing room only when the Eagles took the field against the Smithtown West Bulls. At the end of the second quarter, the score was tied 7-7.

Halftime entertainment was provided by the high school's nationally ranked marching band. Their music and marching skills, under the direction of John Wevers, confirmed why they have been invited to perform in the 2008 New York City Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Homecoming King Pete Scalise and Queen Raven Smith were introduced along with their Royal Court including freshmen Raven Epps and Wade Richardson, sophomores Ashley Noble and David Footman, and juniors Deshanna Richardson and Mervin Springer.

The Eagles returned to the field with a vengeance. Under the leadership of Head Varsity Coach Bruce Muro, and great plays by quarterback Dwayne Stewart and players Chris Nelson, Elijah Butts, and Kurt Cronenburg, the Eagles held the Smithtown West Bulls to a scoreless second half while the Eagles continued to soar.

It was a perfect end to a perfect Homecoming - Eagles Won 26-7!



Pride, Spirit, Victory!



Copiague School District
Copiague, N.Y. 11726

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A MESSAGE from your Superintendent

Dear Residents,

With the holiday season before us and the new year right around the corner, I find it to be a great time to step back, take a breath, and reflect on both our accomplishments and our future goals. We are blessed in so many ways. Our students continue to make us proud and our staff is the best I have ever worked with. All of our achievements are tied to a supportive

community and a Board of Education that always puts children first.

As I stood on the top row of the bleachers at this year's Homecoming and took in the game, the band performance, and the overflowing crowd, I realized that we had finally achieved much of what we had been working toward over the past ten years. I could not have been more pleased.

Copiague has become a great place to learn, work, and live – as our motto proclaims. We have schools that are safe and centers of academic excellence. We will continue to have challenges, as we have always had, but we are now at a different point in our history, for our

foundation is rock solid.

Upon this foundation, we will continue to provide our children with a quality education and life experiences to serve them into the new year and beyond. As you read about our children and staff in this newsletter, please know this is only a small slice of our many activities this fall.

Happy Holidays and best wishes to you and your family.

Regards,



William R. Bolton, Ed.D.

BUILDING Community

Recognizing the importance of a good school-community relationship, for many years the District has partnered with the Kiwanis Club of Copiague to help bring programs to students at the Middle School and High School. Two Clubs, the Builder's Club, at the Middle School, and Key Club, at the High School, are student-run community organizations. Through both clubs students have the opportunity to develop and learn leadership skills. The Builder's and Key Clubs are part of the Kiwanis International youth recognition of service and learning.

"The Builder's Club allows students to plan and work on various community service projects, weekly meetings, and social events to help prepare its members for high school," stated advisor Maria Ostrofsky. "The importance of communication skills, values, teamwork and character building are included in the program's goals." Added Key Club advisor Jennifer Phillips, "Key Club is an international organization whose primary mission is to help others."



Members of the Copiague Middle School Builders Club and Cheerleading Squad teamed together to raise \$2,376 for breast cancer research.

Each club participates in numerous activities throughout the year, including raising money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation and organizing blood, food, toy, and clothing drives.

Members of the Kiwanis Club of Copiague are there for help and guidance if needed. In addition, to honor the students' passion for community service, the Kiwanis Club gives five scholarships every year to members of the Key Club who are graduating seniors.

DISTRICT GOALS 2007-2008

At the November 5 Board of Education meeting, the Board adopted the following goals for the 2007-2008 school year.

• Raise Student Achievement K-12.

- Increase achievement for all students with a focus on targeted subgroups.
- Increase understanding and ownership of the State accountability system.
- Develop a system to collect and analyze data to effectively diagnose, prescribe, and inform student learning.
- Research and design flexible staff development models.
- Extend student learning before, during, and after the school day and year.
- Foster connectedness and collaboration among all teachers.
- Maintain and continue to enhance physical education, athletics, and fine arts programs.

• To maintain and enhance the quality fiscal operations of the District.

- Implement recommendations of district auditors.
- Fiscal appropriations will be aligned with educational initiatives.
- Ensure Contract for Excellence funds are appropriately dispensed in accordance with State Education Department guidelines.
- Utilize alternative revenue resources to minimize fiscal impact on taxpayers.
- Monitor phase two of the construction for quality assurance.

• Staffing/Recruitment.

- Continue to support smooth leadership transitions.

- Seek out and hire high-quality teachers with appropriate multiple certifications.
- Provide in-house incentive and retention strategies for teachers to pursue additional needed certifications.

• Maintain and Improve School Safety.

- Implement redesigned Emergency Management Plan.
- Continue to provide staff development opportunities for conflict resolution, gang awareness, and best practices in school safety.
- Enhance the utilization of data to help plan and manage security operations.
- Aggressively monitor, investigate, and pursue non-resident students.
- Maintain and enhance relationships with Suffolk County Police Department.

• Increase the effective use of technology throughout the school district.

- Increase administrators', teachers' and staff's personal and practical knowledge.
- Enhance access to usable data to inform instructional and supervisory decision-making.
- Deploy hardware acquisitions and upgrade infrastructure.
- Develop "parent portal" with access to grades, attendance, and on-line form submission.

Student-Musicians Earn their Notes

Two student-musicians, Francisco Grenald (Tenor) and Benjamin Webb (Alto Saxophone), at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School have been selected to the 2007 New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Conference All-State performance groups. In addition, Eric Ramdas (Tenor) has been selected for the 2007 NYSCAME/SCMEA Suffolk All-County Music Festival.



Selection to both All-State and All-County performing organizations are extremely competitive and are based on a student's ranking and superior adjudication rating at the annual New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Solo Festival each spring.

A Deauville Gardens *Day Made Better*

On October 2, employees from the OfficeMax Levittown store surprised Deauville Gardens Elementary School fourth-grade teacher Sandy Natal with school supplies for the "A Day Made Better" program. Deauville Gardens Assistant Principal Julie McGahan nominated Ms. Natal for the program.



"Ms. Natal is a wonderful asset to the Deauville Gardens faculty," stated Ms. McGahan. "She is more than deserving of this wonderful grant."

Ms. Natal was one of 1,000 teachers nationwide to receive a variety of school supplies including a new chair, digital camera, a cart, stickers, and maps, totaling more than \$1,400.

HONORING VETERANS

The Town of Babylon recently honored two of Copiague Middle School's finest students for their essays entitled, "Why Should We Honor Our Veterans?", in recognition of Veterans Awareness Week.



Throughout the entire Town of Babylon only six winners were announced and the Middle School students, eighth grader Anthony Frevola, who placed first, and sixth grader Joshua Berkowitz, who came in third, were awarded a \$100 and a \$50 savings bond, respectively.

Anthony and Joshua wrote their essays in their social studies classes as part of the curriculum.

OUTSTANDING PARTICIPANT IN THE 2008 NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Benjamin O. Webb, a senior at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School, has been named as an Outstanding Participant in the 2008 National Achievement Scholarship Program.



Benjamin is one of 4,600 high school seniors nationwide who scored in the top five percent of more than 140,000 Black Americans who requested consideration in the 2008 National Achievement Program when he took the 2006 Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Students "Practice Their Escape Plan", are Honored by Fire Department

For years, the partnership between the District and the Copiague Fire Department has been instrumental in helping to educate the community's children about fire safety and prevention.

Every year as part of this partnership, elementary school students participate in an essay and poster contest that allows them to showcase their creative skills and the important fire safety lessons they have learned.

At a special ceremony held at the Copiague Fire Department, 43 students from the District were honored for their artistic contributions to this year's contest, which was based upon the theme "Practice Your Escape Plan." Copiague Fire Department personnel, members of the District's Board of

Education, and administrators were on hand to honor the student contributors from each elementary school. Five overall winners were then selected from each grade level districtwide for originality and creativity.

This year's grade-level winners are Samantha Sattler (first grade, SEW), Deja Stephen (second grade, GNR), Eileen Gutierrez (third grade, SEW), Lauren Krauzlis (fourth grade, DG), and William Estevez (fifth grade, DG). Each winner received a \$50 gift certificate to Toys R Us from the Fire Department.

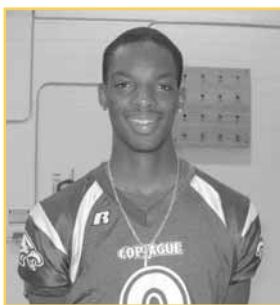
"I would like to thank the Copiague Fire Department for giving our students an authentic experience to write and draw about fire prevention," stated Board President Brian J. Sales.



Throwing Yards

In a remarkable, history-making football game, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School senior Dwayne Stewart and starting quarterback for the Varsity Football team, threw for the ninth highest total yards in Suffolk County history. Dwayne was also only the eighth quarterback in Suffolk County history to throw for five touchdowns in one game. During the game versus Deer Park, Dwayne threw 361 total yards.

This year the Varsity Football team finished the season with a 4-4 record.



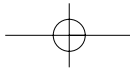
Unsung Heroes

During the November 6th Conference Day, Superintendent of Schools Dr. William R. Bolton took a few moments prior to the start of the day's program to honor six staff members for their exceptional work. Great Neck Road fourth-grade teacher Carol Gamba, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Thomas Giannotti, Middle School English teacher Trudy Felicetti, Deauville Gardens fifth-grade teacher Jan Leimone, Middle School physical education teacher Todd Rauch, and Susan E. Wiley head custodian Tom Tilton were all recognized for their service.



"These individuals are people who come to work and do their best every day," said Dr. Bolton. "They come and give their best, look out for the children of our District and never expect anything in return. These six individuals are unsung heroes."

After a brief description about how each earned the title "unsung hero," they were presented with medallions that bear the District logo and motto. Each of these individuals truly make Copiague a "Great Place to Learn."



Dates to REMEMBER

December 17
Board of Education Meeting 7:30 p.m.

December 18
Middle School Winter Concert

December 19
Susan E. Wiley Winter Concert

December 20
High School Winter Concert

December 24-January 1
Schools Closed
Holiday Recess

January 7
Board of Education Meeting 7:30 p.m.

January 7-11
ELA Assessments Grades 3-5

January 14-18
ELA Assessments Grades 6-8

January 21
Schools Closed

January 22-25
High School Regents Exams

January 28
Board of Education Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Emergency School Closings

In the event that it becomes necessary to close schools due to inclement weather or an emergency situation, the following radio stations and television stations will broadcast the closing of our schools:

WHLI - 1100 AM
WCBS - 880 AM
WBAB - 102.3 FM

WALK - 97.5 FM
WKJY - 98.3 FM
WBZO - 103.1 FM

WBLI - 106.1 FM
News 12 Long Island

Any changes or school closings will also be announced on the district website: www.copiague.k12.ny.us

A DECADE PLUS ONE OF HONOR

The culmination of a perfect Homecoming 2007 celebration was the induction of this year's distinguished alumni into the Copiague Hall of Achievement. This annual event is held to acknowledge and recognize former graduates who, through their own success and contributions to society, serve as role models to students throughout the District.

This year's honorees included Sheri von Essen Casey (Class of 1969), Ronald M. Cherry (Class of 1974), Gregory J. Corrado (Class of 1975), Christopher M. Geackel (Class of 1982), and Colonel James G. Tietjen, USAF (Class of 1970).

After earning her Master's Degree from SUNY Stony Brook, Sherri von Essen Casey returned to her alma mater to begin her career teaching English Language Arts until her retirement in June 2007. In 2006, she was named a "Teacher of Excellence" by the New York State School Boards Association. Her contributions to the District are numerous and she has positively impacted the lives of countless students in the District.

Ronald M. Cherry is a graduate of the University of Maryland Law School and last year was named as one of Maryland's "Super Lawyers," recognizing him as one of the top 5% of all Maryland attorneys. He is a senior partner in the firm of Cherry & Jennifer, P.A., which is located in Towson, Maryland.

Gregory J. Corrado is a visiting scholar at UCLA's Graduate School of Film. His screenplay, *The Troubles*, was chosen from among a field of 4,000 entries to be a top-ten finalist in the Academy Awards screenwriting fellowship. He also wrote and edited the feature film, *Murder Reincarnation*, which was bought and distributed by York Entertainment.

Christopher M. Geackel retired from the Air Force as a Master Sergeant in 2006 after 23 years of service. He received two Associate in Applied Science Degrees in Criminal Justice and Education and Training Management through the Community College of the Air Force. His numerous awards include two Meritorious Service Medals, three Commendation Medals, and five Air Force Achievement Medals.

Colonel James G. Tietjen graduated with honors from the U.S. Air Force Academy and went on to fly ten types of jet fighter aircraft throughout Europe, Asia, and the Pacific. He is also a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College and the USAF Air War College. As an Air Force pilot, he was awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal and the Defense Meritorious Service Medal. He retired in 2004 after 34 years of service.

Congratulations to this year's Hall of Achievement inductees!



Did you know?

That the original project coordinator of the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School and Susan E. Wiley School was Albert Voorneveld Sr. and is the father of current high school principal Albert Voorneveld Jr.?

Give the Gift of Reading

In order to strengthen the District's commitment to promote a lifelong love of reading, the District has established a unique program which enables Copiague community residents to make a lasting contribution to any of the District's school libraries through the "Library Donation Program." These donations can be given in your name or to acknowledge or memorialize another person.

Donating a book in someone else's name can solve the gift-giving dilemma for a "person who

has everything," or can be a lasting memorial for a deceased loved one. The donor may designate which school receives the donation and even specify the type of book. A letter of acknowledgement will be sent out, and a bookplate will be placed in each donated book with the name of the person being honored.

If you are interested in participating in this program contact Dr. Kathleen Bannon, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction at (631) 842-4015, extension 518.



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