

Value Education

May 2011

Superintendent's Notebook

By Dr. Peter J. Mustich

Congratulations and thanks to all on the successful budget passage; what a wonderful victory for our students and our community! I am always appreciative of the community's support for our annual budget and the hard decisions sometimes required to ensure that we continue to provide excellent programs and services to our students.

The vote brings out many familiar faces and offers me an opportunity to catch up with many of our former graduates and their families. The sense of community and support they convey to me is truly overwhelming, and I am especially appreciative of the comments about the quality of our programs, the maintenance of our facilities, and the academic success of our students.

The annual budget is not just a one-year process; it looks forward to the kinds of challenges and opportunities we will encounter in subsequent years. Over the past three years, our local board has consistently worked to balance necessary programs for our students with our community's ability to pay. Since this is the only opportunity for the community to come out and directly vote on the annual expenditures, we have the opportunity to present the proposed budget multiple times and have open discussions about the fiscal plan. We have talked about proactive decisions that were made to preserve programs and class size, including suspension of spending at midyear, reduction in personnel, and reduction of facilities and maintenance projects.



Daniel Warren students celebrate Earth Day.

One decision we made this year was to place our non-public students on public transportation, which will likely result in a savings of \$125,000 for the district, thereby avoiding reductions in other areas that could affect programs, services, or staffing. It is one of many hard decisions that we have made, and will likely continue to make, in the coming years as the State makes more demands on local districts without providing any funding.

As Albany continues to systematically remove support for public education and more is pushed on to our local taxpayer, it becomes increasingly challenging for us to meet this goal. As we move forward, we are going to need your help with our local legislators and the Governor by having you voice your demand for fair State support for local schools and municipalities. This is an issue regardless of whether or not you have students in our schools, because the value of everyone's property is directly linked to the quality of our schools.

I would also like to welcome our two newest board trustees, Deborah Aulfinger and Rocco Germani, as we bid farewell to Heidi Sickles and Nancy Tucci, who have served for 6 and 9 years respectively. I know you join me in thanking them for their tireless service to the board and the community and wish them well as they move on to new challenges.

Introducing Our New Board of Education Trustees

Deborah Aulfinger



Born and raised in Greenwich Ct., Deborah Aulfinger has been a Rye Neck resident for the past 17 years. The Aulfinger family has lived in the same home in the Rye Neck School District for over 70 years and attended our local public

schools throughout those years. Her family has personally watched Rye Neck change and develop over the years to become the award winning school district that is today. Prior to having her older daughter enter the Rye Neck Schools, Mrs. Aulfinger co-chaired The Greenwich YMCA's Annual Campaign for Youth for two years and was a avid volunteer at the Greenwich Y, raising money for children's programs for families in need of financial assistance.

Deborah, along with her husband, Erich, a Rye Neck graduate, own a technology company which she runs full time. Deborah has two daughters, Sara (11) and Ella (4). She is an active member of the Rye Neck PTSA. She chaired & co-chaired The Annual Spring Fair and has been on the Executive Board of the PTSA as Vice President of Fundraising for the past two years with the mission of looking closely at the economy and how it affects our families and the community around us. Mrs. Aulfinger has spent endless hours researching, creating and implementing ways in which funds can be raised funds without causing a financial strain on both district families and community businesses. During the past couple of years although so many families have been financially burdened, there have still been ways to fundraise. Deborah believes that it is this type of planning, long-term thinking and knowledge that will help Rye Neck in the future as we potentially face difficult budget constraints.

Rocco Germani



Born and raised in the Rye Neck community, Mr. Germani has a deep-rooted personal interest in making certain that the character and strengths of this school district remain on a continued course of excellence. He is a graduate of Siena College, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Marketing/Management.

Rocco is the owner of Germani Contracting, Inc., and currently work as an Assistant Building Inspector for the Town/Village of Harrison. This background has given him the experience of communicating with the public on a daily basis, the working knowledge of understanding and enforcing all aspects of local and State Building Code requirements, and a strong awareness of the necessity of solid, practical and far-sighted fiscal planning.

He and his wife, MaryAnn, have two children in the Rye Neck School District, one in Kindergarten and the other in fourth grade. As such, he has a long-term interest in ensuring that the quality of education and standard of excellence of the Rye Neck School District do not waiver.

Having attended the Board of Education meetings throughout this year, as well as in previous years, Mr. Germani has seen first-hand the complexity of school finances and the challenge of how to balance maintaining educational programs with the need to be responsive to the taxpayer in these demanding economic times. With his experience and education, he will strive to work with the Board to foster and preserve the academic level of excellence that has been set forth by his predecessors.

Both Mrs. Aulfinger and Mr. Germani will be sworn into office at the annual organization meeting on July 5th

Farewell to Trustees Tucci and Sickles . .



Nancy Tucci has been a Trustee for nine years, and served as the Board President for two terms. *(A graduate of the Rye Neck schools, she follows in the footsteps of her father, Joseph Delfino, who served*

on Rye Neck's Board from 1974-1980.) "I am ending my term with mixed emotions as the last of our four children will graduate from the Rye Neck schools in June. The combination of our district's size, the dedication of our teachers and administrators and the guidance they have received has well prepared them for college and beyond. I will miss my close involvement with the district and I have been fortunate to serve a community that supports and values public education. I am confident that our two newly elected trustees will continue the work we have done and I look forward to the continued successes of our Rye Neck students."

Heidi Sickles has served on the Board for the past six years, and has been President the past two years. When asked to reflect on her Board tenure, Mrs. Sickles replied, "Being a Trustee is hard work, and there are often tough decisions to be made, but the accomplishments of our students make it all worthwhile. As a Board, we work hard to ensure they have access to a comprehensive educational program, but they are the ones who make the most of their opportunities, very often exceeding our expectations. It is inspiring to see firsthand the dedication of our teachers and administrators to ensure every child reaches his or her potential. This personalized approach really makes Rye Neck stand out."



Both Mrs. Tucci and Mrs. Sickles thank the community for their support, saying that it was a pleasure and honor to serve in Rye Neck.

. . . And to Susan Paley, Bellows Teacher

When asked to reflect on her years in Rye Neck, Mrs. Paley replied, "I've been extremely fortunate. I've taught terrific children and developed wonderful relationships with many of their parents. My colleagues and administrators have always been encouraging and supportive."

After twenty-three years of teaching at the middle school, Mrs. Paley moved with the fifth grade to FE Bellows three years ago. "The transition from a middle school to an elementary school was a challenge," said Mrs. Paley, "but it was one that I enjoyed. Being at Bellows is terrific, but I miss watching the children transition from little kids into adults."

Mrs. Paley concluded, "I truly love teaching, so the decision to retire was extremely difficult. However, I've always wanted to leave on a high note, and this year has been great. I am looking forward to spending more time with my family and having the time to participate in activities that I love."



We wish her many years of happiness and laughter.

Go Panthers! News from the Athletic Department

The rainy season has thankfully come to an end and so has the spring sports season at Rye Neck. Thank you for your continued support of our student/athletes. Some athletic highlights that came out of the spring season include:

- Varsity Baseball and Softball once again qualified for their respective sectional playoff tournaments. Good luck Coach Slater, Coach Spedafino and the teams.
- Boys tennis came in 2nd in their league and seven players qualified for league tournament and five of them moved on to the conference tournament. The future is bright with several key players returning next year to build upon this year's success.
- Track & Field team had another productive season. Twelve team members qualified for the County Championship while six others will be entered into the State Championship qualifying meet at Arlington High School on June 2nd.

- Rye Neck piloted modified (7th & 8th grader) boys and girls lacrosse programs. Coaches Galligan and Sable had 26 players on their boys team and Coaches Mary Lanza and Meghan Garvey had 19 girls. Each team improved greatly over the course of their season under the tutelage of the coaches. We look forward to year two of the lacrosse programs next spring.

Already thinking about summer vacation? Here are important dates during the summer months for students participating on fall sports teams:

Important Physical and Fall Sports Start Dates

July 27th from 8:30am - 11:00am – HS/MS Nurse's Office

August 3th from 8:30am – 11:00am – HS/MS Nurse's Office

August 19th – Football

August 22nd – All other Varsity and JV Sports Begin

September 6th – Modified Sports Begin

Grow to Grow! - An Edible Garden Workshop at Daniel Warren

On May 24, 2011 the Daniel Warren School site hosted an Edible Garden Workshop in collaboration with the Rye YMCA. Over sixty teachers, administrators, health professionals and residents of Westchester County gathered together to learn how to develop an edible garden at their schools. Workshop panelists included Anna Schneider, Cornell Master Gardener, Erica Carest, Center for Healthy Living at Greenwich Hospital, Joan Babcock, Principal Daniel Warren School, John Barchert, Life Science Teacher Rye Middle School and Derek Rawden-Lewis, Scenery Solutions. Panelists shared their expertise on



school garden planning and growing healthy food for children. *(Continued on next page)*

PTSA News

By: PTSA President: Patty Nashelsky

The PTSA is pleased to announce that several grants were made to the school district this winter and spring as a result of our successful Auction, Book Fairs, Gift Wrap, Spring Fair, and Box Tops for Education fundraisers. In January, the PTSA donated the funds for the art rigging system that is now in the Community Room in the MS/HS library, showcasing our students' artwork. Further, in May, the General Membership approved and the Board of Education accepted the funds necessary for the installation of 14 ceiling fans on the top floor of Daniel Warren; the funds necessary for the installation of 12 ceiling fans on the top floor of F.E. Bellows; 2 Laptop computers for the Middle School; a soft seating set for the Library in the MS/HS; 5 Net Books for Special Education English classes and 5 2GB cards to accompany them; and finally, 3 Portable AED Defibrillators for the Athletics Department.

These grants are in addition to the ongoing programs the PTSA supports throughout the year. Cultural arts programs, author visits, Heard in Rye speakers, the Bellows Circus Program, and the Rye Y Lunchtime programs are all fully or partially funded by the PTSA. In addition, the PTSA Safety, Health & Wellness and Environment/Recycling committees work during the school year to raise awareness on these important issues.

Thank you very much to the many PTSA volunteers who organized and worked at these fundraisers and on these committees. None of this would be possible without everyone working together as a community with the one goal of improving our students' educational experience at Rye Neck. I thank the Administration and the Board of Education for working in partnership with the PTSA for a better Rye Neck. Have a great and restful summer.

The PTSA recently elected its officers for next year. Congratulations to the 2011-2012 PTSA Executive Committee members:

President	Patty Nashelsky
Vice-President-High School	Sally Morningstar
Vice-President-Middle School	Karla Aber
Vice-President- F. E. Bellows	Jennifer Rubin
Vice-President-Daniel Warren	Jean Lipman
Vice-President-SEAC	Susan Balsamo
Vice-President-Special Projects	Gina Calcagni
Vice-President-Fundraising	Emily Cohen
Treasurer	Laura VanBuren
Recording Secretary	Allison Reynolds
Corresponding Secretary	Maureen Cuchiarra
Advisor	Julie O'Shea

And a special thank you to the outgoing PTSA Executive Committee members, Mary-Ellen Dorfman, Deb Aulfinger, Barbara McCaffery and Theresa Spencer for a job well done!

Grow to Grow - (Continued from previous page)

The Daniel Warren Peace Garden represents a journey of over a decade. It was born out of a Health and Wellness initiative and a desire to connect children with healthy food sources and exercise through gardening. The garden has evolved from several simple wood raised beds in the front of the building on Harrison Avenue to a more comprehensive outdoor classroom including raised beds, a tree nursery, an educational kiosk and peace sculptures.

Come and visit our beautiful Kindergarten Salad Garden, First Grade Pollinator Garden, Second Grade World Cultures Garden and our beautiful Dr. Wangarri Mathai Tree Nursery. The Daniel Warren Children's Peace Garden is truly a shining example of the importance and success of collaborative partnerships..... staff, teachers, parents and students.

A Good Year for Rye Neck Scientists

Even if you were secluded on a desert island in the Pacific, you could not escape the scientific phenomenon occurring all around us this year. The extreme weather, huge earthquakes, tsunamis, and nuclear meltdown in Japan all underscore the need for critical thinking skills and creative problem solving. Our students continue to develop these skills both in and out of the classroom. Whether by attending conferences or putting their talents to the test as competitors, Rye Neck students have had a busy year in science.

For the first time, Rye Neck High school held a local Brain Bee and sent two students to the Regional Brain Bee held in New York City. In order to compete on this level, our students had to work independently to study college level brain anatomy and physiology. The six students who competed in Rye Neck's Brain Bee were: Corinne Reimers, James Quigley, Camille

Berlioz, Jonathan Rubinstein and Kelly Yang. Jonathan Rubinstein and Kelly Yang emerged as our victors and represented Rye Neck admirably during the regional competition in March.

The interest and passion our students have for science was also seen in this year's science fairs. Throughout the district, students from Daniel Warren through the High School created science projects for their school's fair. For the seventh straight year, Rye Neck students earned regional recognition at the Tri-County Science and Technology Fair, which was held at White Plains High School in April.

The results were as follows:

Bellows Students

Outstanding/Biology	Shoshanna Victor
Outstanding/Chemistry	Julian Allison
Outstanding/Environment	Julia Welty
Outstanding/Physics	Charlotte Murphy
Excellent/Physics	Rafael Zyngier
Excellent/Earth Sciences	Colin Kelley
Excellent/Engineering	Arthur Garnier
3rd Place/Earth Science	Allie Liebmann
3rd Place/Engineering	Sophie Gibson
	Rachel Rubin
2nd Place/Math	Olivia Beach

Middle School

1st Place/Math	Amber Yang
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High School

1st Place/Physics	Matthew Brennan
	Daniel Young

By all accounts, our students have done some excellent work. This has proven to be a very productive and successful year for our developing scientists. We are all very proud of their accomplishments and look forward to another great year.



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Dear Rye Neck Resident

Administrating 777-5200

Dr. Peter J. Mustich, Superintendent
Dr. Kimberly Bucci, Assistant Superintendent for Business

*Thank you Rye Neck Community
for your continued support of the
Rye Neck Schools!*