

Valerie Tator, a social studies teacher at East Islip Middle School, has been named a Distinguished Teacher of 2011 by the Harvard Club of Long Island. Nominated by Harvard student Hannah Hollowell, Mrs. Tator was



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not analyzed to see which will have the least impact on the students. We, as a Board, are asked to make decisions that sometimes affect part of the community, and sometimes all of the community. They are not easy decisions to make.

At the time of this writing, we are in the middle of budget presentations. We look out over the crowd and see the same faces that we see at our monthly Board meetings. We thank them for coming. Be informed, read the literature, ask questions. We need to have the whole community educated on which decision they will make in the upcoming budget vote. Please be part of the process on May 17.

Sincerely,
Ken Cronin

community can accept.
In trying to prepare our children for the

Decisions...

According to the calendar, spring is here. This morning, we had snow mixed with rain. The weather is not the only thing that is hard to predict

electives, revived our clubs and sports, and provided a sound foundation for our yearly budgets. This was done by having sufficient funds to offset spikes in tax increases. Now, Albany has thrown a monkey wrench into the works.

It is bad enough that there are double digit increases in retirement system and health care costs. In addition to those increases, the new state budget calls for more cuts to our state aid. These cuts are in addition to the cuts that were reduction, this could be devastating.

This leads me to the title of this article. Don't for one second think that every item is

this time of year. There are many decisions that have to be made with regard to the upcoming budget. Five years ago, we had a failed budget and had to go on contingency. Electives were gone, clubs and sports were gone, and so was some of the feeling of East Islip Pride.

Over the last four years, we have been able to rebuild. We have added many of the lost

Every year it becomes harder and harder to continue providing the programs children need while remaining fiscally responsible to our community. This dilemma is due in part to rising costs

and increased demands for services, but lately it has been dramatically deepened by reductions in state aid to education. There has been a broad public outcry over rising property taxes on Long Island, and all of us in education have heard the message and are working hard in continuing to find cost-cutting efficiencies. At the same time, some information that is not as widely publicized is being overlooked.

The proposed state budget will reduce

East Islip's state aid by \$2.2 million. This will put state aid at a level \$4.7 million lower than it was in 2008-09. Currently, there is a lawsuit settlement known as the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE,) that provided a formula for increasing the state's contribution to the education of children. This settlement came as a result of the state's recognition that it was not supplying funding appropriate enough to provide a sound, basic education to its children. Districts like East Islip have long recognized that the state's contribution to the cost of educating the district's children was insufficient to meet the growing needs of our student population. Now this formula, which was frozen for the past two years, has been suspended until 2016-17. It is no wonder all of us are considering drastic measures in order to find a budget that our

New Kitchen for Career Development Program

Students in the Career Development Program at East Islip High School celebrated the grand opening of a new kitchen. Teachers in the district's special education department had been working for the past



year with administration to develop a program that expands upon the curriculum of those students in the life skills classes. Career development teachers Margaret Gallagher and Sabina Uettwiller thought the addition of a kitchen perfectly aligned with the goal of the program, which is to find student interests and strengths and assist them in building upon those skills.

The Career Development Program teaches life skills such as health, consumer mathematics, cooking, office skills, retail skills, and reading to students in the program. Each skill is taught using a method that is individualized for each child's needs. Funds for the new kitchen came from grants, with the E.J. Autism Foundation donating the appliances. "It is the



fanciest school kitchen I've ever seen," said Andrew, who is enrolled in the program. "Thank you so much."

Take a Duck to Class Essay Winner

Eighth-grade students in the Family and Consumer Science Class at East Islip Middle School recently participated in the TD Bank Take a Duck to Class Essay Contest. Hosted by the Long Island Ducks, students were asked to submit an essay on "Why my community is important to me." Out of hundreds of essays received from schools across Long Island, four students were chosen as winners of the grand prize. One of those winners was East Islip eighth grader Krista Cook. In her essay, Krista wrote about the East Islip community and how her friends and church are always there to help.



As part of Krista's prize, she received a Visa Gift Card and her entire class got to meet and receive autographs from Long Island Ducks All-Star Ray Navarrete and team mascot QuackerJack. The entire eighth-grade class attended an assembly where Ray and QuackerJack explained to students the importance of a good education and how listening to parents and believing in yourself can help you achieve your dreams. "Whatever it can happen," Ray told students. Despite being told he would never make the varsity baseball team, he added "Growing up, I told myself and my family that this was my dream and I will play baseball."

Students of the East Islip High School put on a stunning production of the classic musical Guys and Dolls on March 31 and April 1 and 2. The performance culminated many months of hard work and dedication. The students have learned every aspect of musical theater production, including acting, singing, dancing, pit orchestra performance and stage craft/crew. Students Evan O'Connor and Sarah Schreiner designed the advertisement poster. In the past, students from the East Islip High School Musical have won Teeny Awards for Best and Supporting Actor and Actress, Pit Orchestra, Stage Crew and Scenic Design. Photographed above: Nick Converso (Nathan Detroit) and Courtney Kenyon (Miss Adelaide) during the show.



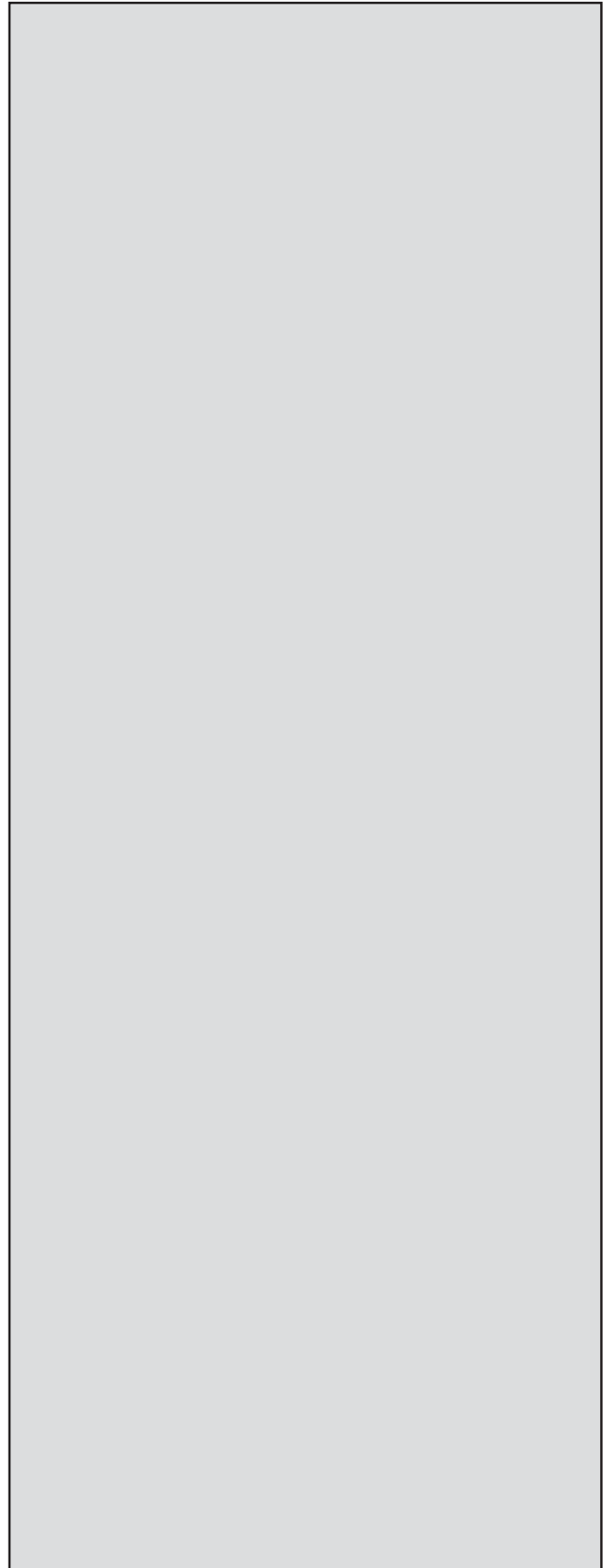
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In an effort to raise drug awareness, the district recently hosted a special seminar for 6th through 12th grade students and community members. The age-appropriate workshops were conducted over the course of two days by Michael Zotto and Jim Murphy of the Strategic Protection Group in West Islip. The pair held one seminar at the middle school for each grade, a seminar for parents and community members at the high school. The seminar was hosted by the Strategic Protection Group in West Islip.

Booster Club Donates \$38K to Benefit Schools



Bridget Welch, a third-grade student at John F. Kennedy Elementary School, recently



Student Participates in NYLC

On March 18, East Islip High School held its annual Breakfast of Champions. Honored at this breakfast were students of the sophomore class who have exhibited exemplary character and conduct during the 2010-2011 school year. Each of the honorees was selected by a member of the High School staff as a student who exhibited these positive qualities in the classroom. During the ceremony, Assistant Principal Mr. Thorley called each student up individually. After receiving their well-deserved applause, each student came to the front to receive a small token of the school's appreciation. Upon completion of the ceremony, students, families of the students and staff members were invited to stay for a light breakfast.

The East Islip High School would like to congratulate the following students and thank the numerous staff members who nominated them for this award.

Honored students:

Kerrigan Apicella, Anthony Bruzzo, James Burke, Nicole Carapi, Jamie Curran, Daniel Hayden, Bridget Kavanagh, Melissa Kelly, Robert Lea, Jacob Levesque, Elaina Lorefice, Rachel Maretsky, Shane Martensen, Justin Morena, Shannon

CAREER ACADEMY RAISES \$4K

East Islip High School hosted a Drive One 4UR School fundraiser, where attendees had the opportunity to test drive some of Sayville Ford's newest model cars while also earning money for their school's Career and Business Academies. For each person who test drove a car that day, Sayville Ford donated \$20 to the Career Academy program.

More than 200 people joined East Islip in the event, which also included a pancake breakfast and Chinese auction prior to the start of the drive. In total, the event raised approximately \$4,000 for the Career Academies.

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