

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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Mill Neck Manor's Deaf Awareness Week: Highlighting Past, Present and Future

Deaf Awareness Week, an annual event, was recently celebrated at Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf. This year's theme, chosen by students and staff, revolved around "Deaf Treasures: Past, Present and Future." Through presentations, artwork, movies and demonstrations, the school showcased people, accomplishments and changing technologies over the years. Also known as International Week of the Deaf (IWD), Deaf Awareness Week is celebrated every September by Deaf communities around the world. IWD aims to increase awareness about the achievements, needs and rights of people who are Deaf. The IWD initiative of the World Federation of the Deaf was first launched 57 years ago in Italy.

Mill Neck's Deaf Awareness Week kicked off with a school-wide assembly and afternoon parade around the campus; each class displaying the banners they created for the occasion. The artwork reflected personal feelings of what Deaf Awareness means. This set the tone for the activities planned for the rest of the week.

While examining the past, current students viewed yearbook photos of previous Mill Neck classes and learned about technology for the Deaf over the years. One, the TTY (Teletypewriter) device developed in 1920, uses phone lines to type out what is being "said," thus allowing for

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conversation between people who are Deaf, or between a Deaf person and a hearing party. TTY was in use by 1964. Another notable technology, closed caption decoders, debuted in 1980.

Among the contemporaries representing The Present, were a Deaf run business, Deaf actors Marlee Matlin, Ryan Lane and Nyle DiMarco, who is currently competing on “America's Next Top Model” and several Deaf chefs. In this last category, two students of Mill Neck’s Culinary Arts program, senior Abby Bethon and recent graduate Edwin Gomez, presented a video showing how they prepared “Easy Chicken Nachos.” Afterward, everyone got a taste.

Deaf Awareness Week at Mill Neck Manor came to a close with a focus on The Future. With that, students were asked to share their opinions on what life might be like in 3015, specifically in the homes of Deaf families, in classrooms and how American Sign Language (ASL) may look. Some thoughts included “super tech” homes, ASL robots and cochlear implants featuring music or WiFi. Each class was then asked to place an item in a time capsule that was buried on campus. Among the items: class photos, Playdoh, a \$1 bill, a favorite book, the magnet from a cochlear implant, a picture of an iPad and floor plans for a house of the future. And what’s a celebration without cake? After Principal Katie Kerzner thanked everyone for all their efforts in making this a wonderful week, everyone headed to the cafeteria for the sweet finale!

Founded in 1947 by Lutheran Friends of the Deaf, Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf opened in 1951. It is part of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, a not-for-profit group dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people who are Deaf, or who have other special needs. For more information, please call 516-922-4100 or visit www.millneck.org.

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Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf kicked off Deaf Awareness Week with a parade around the campus.

One elementary class shows the picture they'll be placing in the Mill Neck time capsule.



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