

TEEN HAPPINESS AND PARENT ANXIETY ABOUND WHEN THE JOURNEY TO A DRIVER'S LICENSE BEGINS

Few rites of passage generate as much happiness and anxiety as when a teen gets their driver's license--teen happiness and parent anxiety. For many Hauppauge High School students, that journey was stalled last March when New York State shifted all Driver Education programs into neutral due to the unfolding Covid pandemic. After many months of deliberation, by the end of August, the State finally sent out a guidance letter on how to gear up for the new school year. Thanks to the combined efforts of High School Assistant Principal, Joseph Wieckhorst; Administrative Assistant, Carol Surico; and Driver Education Teacher, Charles Trupia, our Driver Education Program is now firing on all cylinders, albeit with a few adjustments.

Driver Ed is a NYS Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) and NYS Education Department (SED), regulated program whereby students progress through the Graduated Driver License system to earn their Class D (Senior License) privileges. Driver Ed is a demanding course that requires students to attend 24 hours of in-class instruction, and 24 hours of in-car training. Also, six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction, and eighteen hours of observation. Upon successful completion of the course, a student earns an MV-285 certificate that allows them to qualify for their Senior License at age 17. Those without Driver Ed must wait until they are 18. At Hauppauge High School, Driver Ed is a tuition-based course offered during the Summer, and after school during the Fall and Spring semesters. Our Spring 2020 Driver Ed students endured delays and detours as they finally were able to complete the course by November 2020 under the new program format. That new format was used again for our condensed Fall class and is now underway for our Spring 2021 group.

Our Driver Ed program is in the capable hands of Assistant Principal Wieckhorst, who oversees all aspects of the course and communicates with parents and students through "ParentSquare" and "Google Classroom." Administrative Assistant, Carol Surico, is responsible for the timely submission of all program paperwork and documents the DMV and SED require, and she receives all necessary paperwork from our students. All Driver Ed students know they won't receive their MV-285 without the help of Mrs. Surico. The course itself is taught by veteran Driver Ed Lecture teacher Charles Trupia.

Mr. Trupia began his Social Studies teaching career at Connetquot High School in 1986 and has taught



**Charles Trupia, Driver Education Teacher,
with Carol Surico and HS Assistant
Principal, Joseph Wieckhorst**

Driver Ed from 1990 to beyond his retirement in 2016. Over the years, Mr. Trupia has assisted many public and private high schools on Long Island who needed a teacher with Driver Ed credentials. He came to Hauppauge High School in 2017. "It's a privilege to teach our students here in the Hauppauge community," Mr. Trupia said. "I believe my students know how seriously I take my responsibility. I start my course by reminding them that car crashes are a leading cause of injury and death for people in their age group. I've taught several thousands of students in the last 3 decades and from time to time I meet one in passing, and even as an adult they tell me, 'I still wear my seatbelt no matter what!'" Mr. Trupia says his course is designed to reduce the risk of collisions by demanding his students become skillful, responsible and defensive drivers. Instead of in-person lecture class, Mr. Trupia has modified his presentation to fit the confines of the Google Classroom and Meet formats. "My goal is to engage my students as if I were physically in front of them. I remind them that if they cheer at an inappropriate moment, I know they were watching the Ranger game on another device instead of giving me their full attention," he said. Getting driving lessons is another matter. For the last 3 semesters, this task has become a little more challenging for students and their parents or guardians.



Prior to the Covid pandemic and the requisite restrictions on close-quarter activities, Hauppauge, like most schools, contracted out the Driver Ed in-car training to a private driving school. This typically involved 4 students who rotated driving with their instructor during a 90-minute lesson. Now, the DMV has allowed parents to assume responsibility for this course requirement. To that end, Mr. Trupia has prepared a list of skills a student would be expected to work towards as they progressed through their lessons. "Parents have always been the most important influence on a student-driver as parents and guardians are the chief law-enforcement agent in the student's early driving career," he says. But for many parents, this added responsibility can be very intimidating. What parent hasn't stepped on the invisible brake by their foot as their child made their first turns in traffic? Mr. Trupia said one parent recently told him that she got in the car with her daughter and told her daughter to make believe she was by herself and show her what she would do. "When she checked her face and hair in the rear view mirror and turned the radio up, I knew I was in trouble," she lamented.

Mr. Trupia encourages parents and guardians to start slowly, literally and figuratively. "Building mutual confidence is very important," he says. In addition, the DMV has prepared a valuable booklet, "Parent's Guide to Teen Driving," which provides helpful advice. "Start in a parking lot with basic car control and then advance to local traffic and beyond" Mr. Trupia advises. "This is absolutely a team effort. And together I'm confident that our students will be well-prepared to meet the challenges of the road ahead."

Thank you to Mr. Trupia for this thoughtful and very informative article. We also thank you for your part in educating and keeping our precious new drivers safe on the road.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN FIRST WEEK OF "MARCH MADNESS"

High School students and staff are celebrating "March Madness" at the high school all month. Each Friday, they are wearing something special:

March 5th - Jersey / Sports Day

March 12th - Green Day
(Wear something green)

March 19th - Freaky Friday
(Teachers dress like students and students dress like teachers)

March 26th - Hauppauge Pride Day
(Wear Hauppauge apparel or colors)

Here are some photos from "Sports Jersey Day."

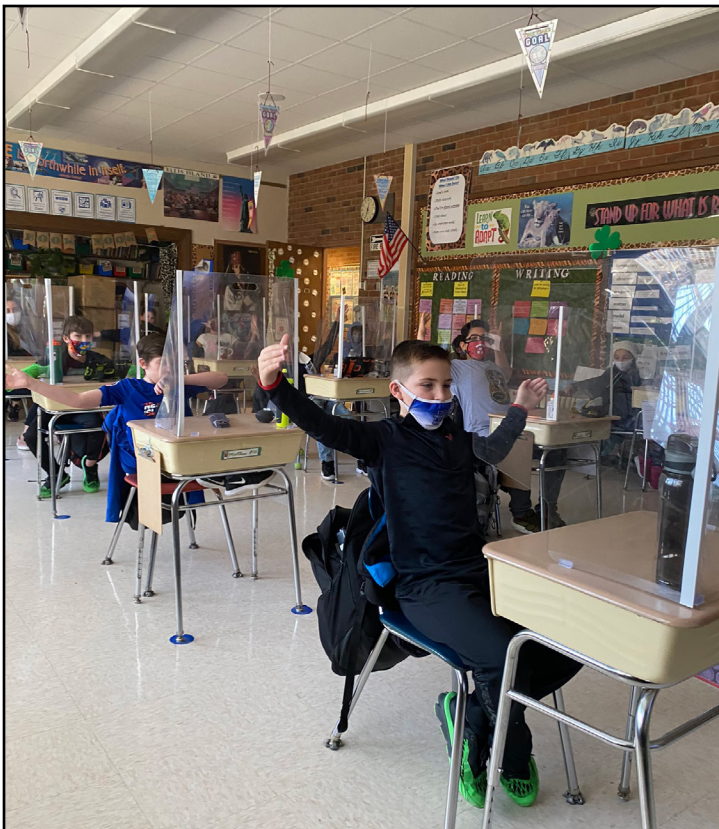


BRETTON WOODS FIFTH-GRADERS "VISIT ALASKA" AS THEY LEARN ABOUT "THE IDITAROD - THE LAST GREAT RACE"

The Bretton Woods fifth-grade class of Veronica Weeks and Tara Dungate has been learning about the "Iditarod Sled Dog Race" that began last Saturday. As part of their Argument and Advocacy Literature Unit, the students read articles and debated whether they feel it is good or bad to run dogs in the Iditarod. They used evidence from their articles to back up their claim. Also, they wrote letters to mushers that they are following throughout the race. The students will be watching the finish line on a live webcam.

Ms. Weeks and Ms. Dungate's class were also able to take a virtual field trip to the "Denali National Park." Ms. Weeks said, "The virtual field trip was the icing on the cake! The Park Ranger taught them about sled dogs, Denali, and Alaska. The students also used what they learned from the Park Ranger to make their decisions about using dogs to pull sleds."

Here are some great photos of the class on their "field trip to Alaska!"



SPRING HAS SPRUNG AT PINES ELEMENTARY

by: Jeanne Beyer
Administrative Assistant at Pines Elementary

On Wednesday, March 10th, Reading Teaching Assistant, Mrs. Lombardo, spotted the first courtyard turtle of the season in a sunny spot along the wall. Judging by its size, it was one of the oldest Pines turtles and he was still dusty from his winter hibernation underground. A story is told that a previous Pines teacher, Mr. Shelhorn, introduced the first turtle into the courtyard over 20 years ago. The tale continues to say that 3 other adult turtles were given to him by people and they were added to the courtyard prior to his passing in 2006.

Since that day the turtles have been creating nests, laying eggs and hatching new babies. Each year we have been lucky enough to see one or more half-dollar sized baby turtles moving about in the courtyard. A few years ago it was estimated that about 20 turtles make the Pines courtyard their home.

Please note, that Pines does not accept new turtles into the courtyard. Turtles are territorial and if you find one you should observe it but not move it. It is in its home territory. If you do see it in danger, such as trying to cross a street, it would be kind to move it across to the other side. It is best not to touch the turtle with bare hands. If you do not have gloves, please be sure to wash your hands well afterwards.

We look forward to more "turtle sightings!"



SALUTE TO SENIORS

Join us in celebrating the Class of 2021 and their future plans with our "Salute to Seniors."



**SYDNEY
FLYNN**



*Sydney Flynn
will attend
Roger Williams University
on a Presidential Scholarship.
During high school,
Sydney enjoyed running
Varsity Cross Country
and Winter Track (4 years),
and playing Varsity Softball (2 years).
Sydney was named
Captain of Cross Country and Track
and was also inducted into the
National Honor Society,
and Spanish Honor Society.
Congratulations, Sydney!*

*Lily Gennari
will attend the
University of Tennessee
where she will study
biological sciences.
During high school,
Lily enjoyed participating in
Varsity Cheerleading,
the Class of 2021,
Ignition, and Varsity Club.
Lily was a 2x County Champ
and a State Champion
for Cheerleading,
and was inducted into the
National Honor Society.
Congratulations, Lily!*



**LILY
GENNARI**



**BIOLOGICAL
SCIENCES**

Continued on next page . . .

SALUTE TO SENIORS



**ALEXEUS
RULAND**



PRE-MED

*Alexeus Ruland will attend
Hofstra University as a
Pre-Med student on a Dean's Scholarship.*

*During high school,
Alexeus enjoyed participating in
Natural Helpers, Chamber Choir,
and Advanced Musical Theater.*

*Alexeus also enjoyed
horseback riding and will
compete in the
Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association
in college.*

*Alexeus is an IEA Regional Award Rider
and a Girl Scout Silver Award recipient
who is currently working on her Gold Award.*

*Alexeus is an IUM South New York Teen
pageant title holder who also earned the
Gold Level Presidential Volunteer Service recognition.
Congratulations, Alexeus!*

"EGG YOUR LAWN" EASTER FUNDRAISER TO HELP SUPPORT THE HIGH SCHOOL QUIZ BOWL TEAM

The High School Quiz Bowl Team is helping out the Easter Bunny this year. If you would like to surprise your little ones, the team will hide candy-filled plastic eggs around your lawn for an early morning "Easter Egg Hunt!"

The egg-hiding will take place on Saturday, April 3rd, between 8:00 and 11:00 p.m. Student volunteers will be wearing dark clothes to be extra stealthy!

[Click here](#) to get all the information on how to schedule these helpers to give your kiddos a fun time hunting eggs!

*Sponsoring the
Hauppauge High School
Quiz Bowl Team*

*Help fund tournament
entry fees*

"Egg Your Lawn" Easter Fundraiser

Limited to HSD residents only



20 eggs for \$30 or 30 eggs for \$40



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