

# SEPTA WORKS FOR STUDENTS

SEPTA had a busy year planning and facilitating events to benefit Harborfields students and their families. One of their biggest fundraisers was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Valentine's Dinner Dance at the Historical Thatched Cottage. SEPTA members Louise Pietroforte, Nilsa Salko, Diane Young, and Cathy Kitakis worked together to plan an evening that would be enjoyable to all who attended. While the evening was a tremendous amount of fun for all that participated, the monies raised will go towards improving the academic and social lives of Harborfields school district students.

Harborfields SEPTA also proudly hosted an "Event to Raise Awareness about Autism" at Harborfields High School. Colleen Rappa, Mary Beth Palo, and Denise Leparik, members of the Autism Event Committee of 2006, worked tirelessly to put together a program that would be enlightening and inspiring to the 400 guests from across Long Island and New York City who attended.

Renowned author and autism expert David Kirby, who wrote *Evidence of Harm – Mercury in Vaccines and the Autism Epidemic*, was also available to answer questions and sign copies of his book. In addition, the Harborfields SEPTA presented a Distinguished Service Award to long-time special needs advocate and New York State Assemblyman, Harvey Weisenberg.

In keeping with its mission to improve the academic and social lives of Harborfields special needs students, SEPTA has also been able to create and support numerous district programs, such as the Summer Bridging Program, Teacher Continuing

Education and Enrichment Programs and the Social Skills Program at Thomas J. Lahey Elementary School. SEPTA is proud to have distributed more than \$8,000 in senior scholarships, and acknowledges and thanks the administration, Board of Education, teachers, community, and all of the local businesses and corporate sponsors who have offered their support.



*Renowned author and autism expert David Kirby signed books and answered questions for close to 400 people at SEPTA's Event to Raise Awareness About Autism. Pictured are Mary Beth Palo (Event Coordinator), Colleen Rappa (SEPTA Co-President), David Kirby (Author of Evidence of Harm), and Denise Leparik (Service Coordinator).*

## Harborfields Highlights

Publications Coordinator: Tina Smith

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