

NEWSLETTER November 2014



One of the primary goals of the Kemper Memorial Park Preservation Fund is to educate the community about the history and significance of the Park. Toward that end, KMPPF Board members Jan Northrup, Mark Schumer and John Esposito made presentations to various groups and governing bodies in Larchmont and Mamaroneck throughout the past year. These included:

The Larchmont Historical Society, The Mamaroneck Historical Society, The Village of Mamaroneck Board of Trustees, The Village of Larchmont Board of Trustees, The Mamaroneck Town Council, Larchmont Boy Scout Troop 4, Veterans of Foreign Wars David Potts, Jr. Post 1156 and American Legion Post 128 in Rye.

In each of these venues, the program began with introductory comments by KMPPF President Jan Northrup and a viewing of the video titled: ***Tribute to the Fallen***, which documents the history of Kemper Memorial Park from its inception to its current status. Following the video, KMPPF Treasurer Mark Schumer encouraged utilization of the Park and explained why it is such an important asset to the community. Retired Mamaroneck teacher John Esposito then offered an educator's perspective on why the Park is such a powerful teaching tool and a valuable resource for curriculum development.

The program concluded by emphasizing Kemper Memorial Park's significance to past, present and future generations as a testament to community pride and commitment never to forget the sacrifices that have been made on our behalf.

The feedback from all of these presentations has been extremely positive and it is gratifying for us to know that Kemper Memorial Park has such widespread community support.

We welcome all opportunities to expand our audience, so please contact us via our website (kempermemorialpark.org) for further information regarding the program.

Contest sponsor Paul Cantor with contest winners: Eralda Bala (poster), Emily Olson (poster), Natalie Spangle (essay), & Arthur Thery (essay)



This year's essay contest asked students to consider how the crusade to restore human rights that began on June 6, 1944 could be continued today. Contest winners **Natalie Spangle** and **Arthur Thery** both agreed that our debt of gratitude to those who sacrificed so much on D-Day should include a commitment to continue the fight to ensure human rights throughout the world and suggested ways this might be done.

Natalie's inspiration came from Malala Yousafzai, a young Pakistani girl who, from the age of eleven, had been advocating for quality education for girls in her country. At the age of fourteen, she was shot in the head and almost killed for her beliefs by the Taliban. Nevertheless, Malala *"continues to speak for the women of the world who do not have a voice of their own."* Natalie maintains that *"Improving rights for education worldwide is a big part of what we must do now to honor those heroes of D-Day and their goal of human rights for all."* For Natalie, the common denominator in Malala Yousafzai and the heroes of D-Day is the fact that *"true heroes are the ones who fight for what they believe in, no matter what the cost."*

Arthur's essay begins with a quote from the United Nations Human Rights website proclaiming that human rights are inherent to all human beings. Arthur feels that he and his generation are obliged to spread the word about human rights violations through social media like: **Facebook, Twitter** and **Instagram**. But for him this is only a first step. *"The second step to guaranteeing everyone basic human rights is to make sure people do something about it."* He goes on to say: *"Many times, people, including me, will skim over a picture – look at it and feel bad for a second and then forget about it five minutes later."* Arthur suggests that charities, school clubs as well as organizations like UNICEF and Amnesty International offer numerous opportunities to get involved. He even suggests communicating with a pen pal to show that you care about someone whose human rights are being denied. Arthur's essay ends with a call to action. *"In this day and age we have at our disposal a great arsenal of tools like iPhones, tablets and computers, so let us make sure that these get used for all people, not just for us. Instead of posting a selfie, next time post a picture or share an article about some of the things you feel need fixing in the world, and make people aware! Let's make a difference, in honor of all the soldiers who fought for the very rights we have today. Let's show them that we are ready to take up the task to change the world."*

As is customary, the major portion of the June Board of



Essay Contest

Education meeting was used to recognize the careers of this year's retirees. One of them was MHS social studies teacher Mary Cronin. In his remarks, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert Shaps acknowledged Mary's numerous contributions to the District and emphasized why she would be missed. Regarding one of those contributions, Dr. Shaps stated: *"Since 2000, when descendants of Richard M. Kemper approached the history department with the idea of an essay contest to honor those members of this community who made the ultimate sacrifice during World War II, few of us even knew about the memorial on the Boston Post Road that bears his name. From those early days, Mary was instrumental in publicizing the contest and increasing student involvement. Later, when faced with Board and community pressure to relocate the memorial, Mary was steadfast. She continually kept the interests of the Kemper family at heart, but more importantly, what lay at the forefront of Mary's mind, were the interests of the many veterans of all wars residing in our community. She remarked that for many, the Kemper Memorial was the only place for this special group of people to gather and honor and remember loved ones. For the students in this community, she felt, what better setting to learn and reflect on the sacrifices that others made for them. There is little question that without Mary's efforts and dedication, the Kemper Memorial and the essay contest would not be as large and as important a part of our school and community."*

Needless to say, Mary couldn't retire until she felt that the essay contest's future was in good hands. Fate may have played a part in making newly hired social studies teacher Peter Greene her next-door neighbor in the Palmer Building, but Mary's instincts told her that he was the right person to take her place. Peter shares Mary's commitment to honoring our veterans and recognizes the value of the essay contest. At Mary's request, Peter made his debut hosting this year's contest and it was obvious that she had chosen the right person for the job. We, and the Kemper family, look forward to working with Peter in the years ahead.

Of course, Mary's students and colleagues regretted having to say goodbye. Fortunately, the members of the KMPPF Board did not have to do so, since one of the things Mary will do in retirement is continue to serve as our vice president.



Dom Rigano and Jacklyn DeVito



Please visit our website
[kempermemorial park.org](http://kempermemorialpark.org)
to view all of the interviews

VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

As an intern for the Kemper Memorial Park Preservation Fund (KMPPF), Jacklyn DeVito, MHS Class of 2014, interviewed World War II veterans for the Library of Congress Veterans History Project. Jacklyn interviewed three local veterans who were raised in Mamaroneck and were all graduates of Mamaroneck High School: Tony Marsella, who served as an interpreter for the U.S. Army, Dom Rigano, who served as airplane mechanic for the 93rd Bombardment Group and Tom Santoro, who served as a U.S. Marine in Guadalcanal, Okinawa and China. Coincidentally, all three veterans are of Italian American descent and their interviews reflect the important role the Italian American youth of Mamaroneck played in World War II. Jacklyn also interviewed Jack Burke in Richmond, Virginia via Skype. Jack participated in the D- Day landings on Omaha Beach, the attack on the Maisy Battery and the Irsch-Zerf Raid.

Fortunately, Jacklyn was able to make videos of these interviews and they have been sent to the Library of Congress and are on our website, kempermemorialpark.org. She also prepared books about each veteran's family and his service in World War II. These books were given to the veterans and copies are available at the Larchmont Public Library.

In addition, Jacklyn gathered photos and memorabilia from Irene Stone, a World War II veteran who served in the SPARS, the women's section in the U. S. Coast Guard. These items were also sent to the Library of Congress, are on our website and are available at the Larchmont Public Library.

We are grateful to Jacklyn for all of the work she did and to the veterans who were kind enough to allow her to interview them. The interviews were both enjoyable and informative. We are hoping to do more!



80 North Chatsworth Avenue
Larchmont, NY 10538

kempermorialpark.org

Veterans Day Ceremonies 2014



2014 Mamaroneck Memorial Day Parade

American Legion Post 90

Tuesday, November 11 – 11 a.m.

Veterans' Memorial on Prospect Avenue
(Between Mamaroneck Ave & Mt. Pleasant Ave.)
Village of Mamaroneck

American Legion Post 347

Tuesday, November 11 – 5 p.m.

American Legion Post 347 Hall
Flint Park - Village of Larchmont

Mamaroneck High School

There will be a brief ceremony in recognition of Veterans Day on **Thursday, November 6, at 2:45 p.m.** at the Vietnam showcase located on the main concourse of Mamaroneck High School. Speakers will include MHS Principal Elizabeth Clain and MHS social studies teacher Peter Greene.

