

NYSSD Circle



A Publication of the New York State School for the Deaf



**2010-2011
Spring Issue**

***Jamel Edwards & Amanda Miller
Crowned King and Queen at the
Winter Festival.***

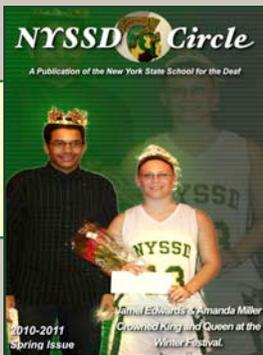
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Newsletter Designer
Harry Baran
hbaran@mail.nysed.gov

Print Editor
Robin Lewis
rlewis@mail.nysed.gov

Managing Editor
Michelle Simmons
msimmons@mail.nysed.gov



On The Cover

Jamel Edwards & Amanda Miller crowned king and queen at the 2010-2011 Winter Festival.

NYSSD Mission Statement

Our Mission is to provide a foundation of learning that will enable students to become independent, self-respecting, and contributing adults in a multi-cultural society.

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The New York State School for the Deaf

401 Turin Street Rome, NY 13440

315-337-8400 (Phone) 315-337-8489 (TTY) nysed@mail.nysed.gov (email)

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Administration

*Carriann Ray
Superintendent*

*Jason Dee
Institution Steward*

*Daniel Roberts
Assistant Superintendent*

*Gordon Baker
Pupil Personnel*

*Erika Furbeck
Dormitory and School Transition
Department Head*

*Martin Gorski
High School Residential Supervisor*

*James Lorraine
Head of Maintenance*

*Christine Wagner
Head of Food Services*

As I write this excerpt for the newsletter the seasons are almost ready to change yet again. It has been a long and difficult winter as far as snow, ice and cold temperatures go. With that in mind one would think that the spirits of the kids and staff would be down, but that is not the case. NYSSD is booming with activity and good times. Staff and students have been very busy preparing for exams, which just took place at the end of January, and we had many success cases of students passing RCTs and Regents exams in preparation for graduation. This is no small accomplishment as these exams are very difficult and students spend hours and hours working on them each day. Winter basketball has been very busy and the girl's basketball team has been occupied with the local games and preparing for the ESDAA tournament in Rochester. The boys have been teaming up with local fellows from the Rome YMCA and they have had some very exciting evening games against community teams. The dormitory kept students busy all holiday season with celebrations and community outings. The students had opportunities to go to the movies, roller-skating, hockey games, basketball games at SU, local school collegiate events, snowshoeing and some snowman building competitions. We are continuing to finish up the dormitory renovations with the final move of the health center going back to the dormitory wing. The 2011-2012 budget is under way and the Leadership Team is working diligently to come up with a budget that reflects fiscal savings and appropriate programming for all students. As Spring approaches, in a few weeks, that will mean preparations for graduation will be under way and we will yet again be saying goodbye to several graduates and staff. In the mean time we have plenty of fun activities for the students, and the classrooms are busy preparing for yet another round of testing this spring. I hope you enjoy the newsletter and reading about all the wonderful things that have been going on here at NYSSD. Take Care!

Carriann Ray

Carriann Ray
Superintendent

True Character

Submitted by Assistant Superintendent Dan Roberts



True Character . . . is nothing that comes in a bottle or a can. It cannot be purchased at your local corner market. Webster’s Dictionary defines “Character” as the following: “The combination of qualities or features that distinguishes one person, group, or thing from another.”

The Rome Character Initiative is a group of individuals who recognize students in Rome that demonstrate good moral character on a daily basis. On February 16, 2011, two students at our school were invited to John Joy Elementary School in the Rome City School District to be recognized for this achievement.

Mr. Miguel Hernandez and Ms. Taiba Dawlat received awards for good character. Both students demonstrate respect, honesty, integrity, fidelity, humility, kindness, generosity, and compassion at school and in the community. This evening was shared with family, faculty, and staff. After the ceremony, the students were invited to a reception and had their pictures taken. Please join me in congratulating Miguel and Taiba for achieving this honor. Both students are wonderful role models at the New York State School for the Deaf!

After School Snack Program

Submitted by Susan Thomas

NYSSD has applied to the State Education Department's Child Nutrition Program to participate in the After School Care Snacks Program, a component of the National School Lunch Program. The intent of the program is to be an incentive for children to participate in programs organized to provide after school care that includes education and enrichment activities.

NYSSD offers a wide range of both educational and recreational programming for our students from the ages of 5 years to 21 years old. Activities for day and residential students include sports, band, scouting and other club opportunities, homework/tutorial services as well as off campus outings and

field trips. Nutrition plays an important role for our residential/ after school program. Our dormitories are equipped with full kitchens and students are taught the importance of appropriate exercise, nutrition and healthy eating habits and skills. Students are provided daily snacks dispensed by the Food Service Department to assure they meet the Snack Meal Pattern program requirements.

The USDA has amended/clarified eligibility requirements for after school programs for the after school snack components of the National School Lunch Program. What this means for NYSSD is that once approved for the program, we will receive reimbursement from the Child Nutrition Program which will assist our school in promoting this important initiative.



KING AND QUEEN

2010-2011 Winter Festival

Submitted by Gordon Baker

The 2011 NYSSD Winter Festival was held during the week of January 3rd - January 6th. The highlight of the event was the crowning of the King and Queen by Superintendent Carriann Ray at halftime of the Holy Cross vs NYSSD basketball game. The Royal Court (pictured above) consisted of three couples nominated by Secondary and Middle School Department students and voted on during the Festival Week. They included: (left to right) Justin Corron, 10th Grade and Miranda Matthews, 7th Grade; Jamel Edwards, 11th Grade and Amanda Miller, 12th Grade.

Congratulations to Jamel and Amanda on their selections as the 2011 NYSSD King and Queen.

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NYSSD

Show and Tell

Submitted by Theresa Matt



Each day in Mrs. Matt's Little Listeners Kindergarten class, a student brings in a special item from home or the dormitory that he/she would like to share with the class. It can be an item that starts with the letter the class is learning about that week or just something of interest.

Before a student can "show" the item, he/she must answer classmates questions about the hidden item. Classmates choose one or two question cards and guess what the item is from the answer clues. Finally, the Show and Tell person gets to reveal the surprise item and tell a little more about it as he/she shows it to the class. Students are often photographed with their Show and Tell surprise and the photo is put into their own Show and Tell Book along with their previous sharing experiences. Some of our favorites are shown above!

Recreation Highlights

Submitted by Dennis Ryan

The winter months at NYSSD have brought some exciting after-school activities to the school for the 2011 school year. NYSSD has always had a wide variety of enriching programs to benefit the students after school focusing on integrated and community activities.

One of the most popular activities is the annual snow tubing outing to Taberg Tower Tubing. The students this year had an absolute blast. The hills were fast and students such as Abigail Anzalone, Kyle Sova, Isaiah Corron, and Robert Foland had a super time in the tubing activity. Another popular winter activity is bowling. The students bowl at Rome's King Pin Lanes. NYSSD's leading bowlers included Kyle Sova, Aaron

Spencer, Bataan Hoang, Anatasia Steele, and Miguel Hernandez.

Some of the other winter activities included roller skating, swimming, the Deaf Social Chat Group at Panera Bread, and a literacy program at Barnes and Noble. The students also extensively utilize the Rome YMCA with NYSSD students having open access to this facility. The students absolutely love the therapy pool, the weight room, and playing racquetball at the "Y". NYSSD also enjoys a monthly closed captioned movie at the Rome Cinema Theater. The students were treated to the "Green Hornet" in February.

The winter months are times of fun for the students at NYSSD. Dennis Ryan would like to thank all of the excellent staff who help make these quality experiences possible for our students.

Learning to Fabricate and Build in 7th & 8th Grade Technology Classes

Submitted by Harry Baran



In the fall issue of the *Circle*, I had written briefly about the 7th and 8th



grade students attending Strough Middle School for technology classes. The students were beginning to learn how to construct projects out of wood and from sheet metal. From both classes, students were able to use what

they learned to create neat projects. Projects created in the 7th grade class were gum-ball machines, egg-crash cars, and race boats. Students in the 7th grade class were Miranda Matthews,



Jill Wildberger, and Alexis Beckwith. This class was an introduction to technology to make students aware of what hand tools and power tools were and how they were to be used.

Projects in the 8th grade class were toolboxes, catapults, and carbon dioxide (CO2) cars. Students in the 8th grade class were Kyle Sova and Kristin Miller. This class was a continuation of

the technology curriculum for students



to apply information learned in 7th grade technology to more complex projects in 8th grade technology.

Before these classes, many of the students had never used power tools or fabricated with wood and metal. This was a great learning experience for both classes and they had a wonderful time.



Five Branches of Military

Submitted by Nancy Quance

On November 8th, the students in Mrs. Quance's class were honored to have Colleen Price, a Veteran of the Army, come to their classroom and speak about the Five Branches of the Military.



NYSSD Students Invade the Syracuse Carrier Dome

Submitted by NYSSD Residential Supervisor Marty J. Gorski



On Wednesday, February 9, 2011, approximately 35 NYSSD students and staff visited the Syracuse Carrier Dome to watch the Syracuse Orange take on their Big East rivals the Georgetown Hoyas. This basketball match-up between these two nationally ranked power-house teams was a guaranteed exciting evening of entertainment for all in attendance. They did not disappoint the crowd of over 28,000 spectators.

After we fought our way through the large crowd we managed to get settled into our seats before the action began,

but we had to stop at the concession stand for a pre-game snack of popcorn, crackerjacks, peanuts, or nachos and an ice cold soda in a souvenir cup before tip-off. With our bellies full it was now game time. With the crowd on their feet stomping, waving, and screaming for our "Orange", our students were soon to follow, joining in on all the fun and excitement of the Dome. In what turned into a thrilling "see-saw" game, both teams battled back and forth until the Hoyas of Georgetown out hustled the Orange from Syracuse to steal the victory at the end. It was a "Nail-Biter" right to the very end before the Orange fell to the Hoyas 64-56.

Although a very tough loss for the home team, our students had a fantastic evening out in Syracuse. Many of our students were visiting the Carrier Dome for the very first time, and were in "total awe" of this enormous facility.

The experience of being part of a crowd of over 28,000 screaming and orange dressed Syracuse fans will be a memory of a lifetime for many of our students. We here at NYSSD are very grateful that our students had this opportunity to be part of this environment and share this wonderful experience that I am sure they will hold onto for a very, very, long time. We hope we have another opportunity to visit the Dome again in the near future and hope we can cheer them onto a victory. Good luck to the Syracuse Orange the rest of the season - "GO' CUSE"!



Three Cups of Tea *Submitted by Nancy Quance*

Taiba Dawlat and Jean Gates gave a presentation related to the book, *Three Cups of Tea*, to the students in Mrs. Quance and Mrs. Jackson's classes. After the presentation, some of the students made wooden dolls and clothed them in traditional dress of the Afghanistan people.



LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NYSSD

Healthy Living in the Dormitory

Submitted by Kelly Szyper, Jenny Roberts, Terry LaGasse, & Cherie Day

The elementary/middle school Girl Scout troop has been learning how to live a healthy lifestyle in the dorm. The girl scouts have recently been involved in learning healthy eating habits and about the different kinds of food groups. The girls went through different magazines and cut out many varieties of food and placed them in the proper food categories on our handmade food pyramid. The girls also helped prepare a healthy chicken and rice dinner in the dorm.

As part of a healthy lifestyle also comes the exercise part of it. The girl scouts have been regularly joining the Zumba Fitness Exercise class that is offered here at our school in the gymnasium. The girls put a lot of effort into it and really enjoy themselves and the energy it brings. The girls are very proud of themselves for following through with all aspects of the healthier lifestyle. This makes them a happier, healthier girl scout.



Making Friends

Submitted by Theresa Matt & Cathy Lee

Students from Little Listeners Pre-K and Kindergarten programs routinely get together with hearing peers from Children's Corner Day Care. Activities foster interaction among the children through games, songs, crafts and dramatic play. Little Listeners and Children's Corner staff take turns planning and hosting activities. The activities provide the children with opportunities to practice communication and social skills while meeting and making new friends!



Social Skills and Character Education News

“Make a Difference”

Submitted by Gail Brett

The whole school is involved in Three Cups of Tea and Listen to the Wind! These are the books by Greg Mortenson that tells of his experience in the Middle East and how he came to form the Pennies for Peace organization. How is the school involved?

- ☉ Students are reading Three Cups of Tea or Listen to the Wind in their ELA class
- ☉ Staff are reading Three Cups of Tea to be able to discuss it with the students
- ☉ Donating and raising money for Pennies for Peace
- ☉ Making posters of our character words: Gratitude, Persistence, Respect, Empathy, and Kindness
- ☉ Learning about how Pennies can turn into building schools
- ☉ Learning how education can promote peace (when we learn about each other we understand each other better and fight less)

- ☉ Participating in skits to demonstrate these ideas
- ☉ Displaying dolls with costumes from other cultures
- ☉ Making peace flags

It's a school and dorm-wide effort. Our students are “Making a Difference” in their own lives and other people's



Boys Basketball

Submitted by Coach Dennis Ryan

The Winter of 2011 brought a new program for boys basketball at NYSSD. For the first time the NYSSD boys joined the Rome YMCA Boys Basketball League. The YMCA League consists of 5 teams from interested high school boys from the Rome area.

NYSSD finished the YMCA League with a 4-4 record and tied for second place in the league. The leading scorer for the NYSSD team was George Wright who averaged 8 points and 6 rebounds per game. Justin Corron also was a starter on the NYSSD team and led the league in steals-averaging 3.5 steals per game. Geovany Lainez and Joshua Amberg also provided key support to the team. All of the games for the NYSSD

team were played at NYSSD giving the boys from NYSSD a comfortable home environment.

Dennis Ryan coached the NYSSD team in the league. Coach Ryan was pleased with the effort and enthusiasm that the boys showed during practice and games. The initial venture into the YMCA League was a huge success and Coach Ryan hopes to add several more boys to the NYSSD team next year. It is always exciting to see the boys from NYSSD playing on a team with community boys and working toward a common goal. The sportsmanship and camaraderie of the team was outstanding. Thanks to everybody who helped make this a positive integrated experience for the NYSSD boys.

The 5K Challenge

Submitted by Erika Furbeck

A group of high school and middle school girls, and even a staff member have decided to lace up their shoes and take on a challenge presented to them. What is the challenge you ask? I have challenged the girls to train with me for 3 months and at the end of May we will all participate in a 5K run together. This challenge did come with much hesitation and doubt, but after some persuasion and reassurance the girls were excited to take on the challenge. Our training will begin on March 8th. We hope to run our 5K on May 31st. We will keep you posted with our progress and give you all the details to the final challenge when the time comes. If any staff would like to join us for training you can find us in the gym on Tuesday and Wednesday nights from 7:00 – 8:00.

Wish us luck and Happy Running to all the participants!

The girls that have agreed to participate in the challenge are:

Amanda Miller	Ashley Dupuis
Sarah Davis	Kristin Miller
Anastasia Steele	Melinda



A Winter Visitor

Submitted by Theresa Matt



Little Listeners Kindergartners have been reading and doing crafts while learning about Arctic animals and their habitat. We were fortunate enough to have a Siberian Husky puppy pop in to visit the Little Listeners Pre-K and K classes! Her name is Michigan, a kindergarten student,

Marquis Reeves' holiday surprise. Children in both classes got to ask Marquis and his dad lots of questions about Michigan and had an opportunity for some up close interaction with the little husky. Everyone hopes to see her again...when her favorite season is over!



Student Interviews

Submitted by students in Mr. Baran's Fundamentals of a Mac class: Brian Borden, Sarah Davis, Ashley Dupuis

Students in the Fundamentals of a Mac class are learning to use a program called Pages used for word processing and page layout. This program was created by the Apple company and is used on Macintosh computers. Students were assigned a project to interview staff at the New York State School for the Deaf (NYSSD) and to work together to create a page for the school newsletter here in this issue of the Circle. Here are their interviews.

New Department Head at NYSSD

Submitted by Brian Borden



Q: What is your name?

A: My name is Erika Furbeck.

Q: What do you do at NYSSD?

A: I am the Residential Department Head.

Q: How did you become the Residential Department Head?

A: When I first started at the New York State School for the Deaf (NYSSD),

I was a teacher assistant. During that time, I had taken classes in community & human services. Shortly after I received my degree, this position opened up, and I interviewed for it and got the job.

Q: How did you find out about your job at NYSSD before you were hired?

A: I found out about the residential department head position because I knew that Mike Vervelde, the gentleman who was the residential department head before me, was relocating to Pennsylvania with his wife. When he left, I knew the position would most likely be open.

Q: What inspired you to work at NYSSD?

A: I have a twin brother Matthew, who is deaf. I learned some sign language growing up, and I always had an interest in the deaf community due to my brother's deafness.

Q: How long have you worked at NYSSD.

A: 10 wonderful years.

Q: What classes or work experience did you have to prepare you for your job here?

A: I have an associate's degree in Liberal Arts and a bachelor's degree in Community and Human Services. I also have had ASL I II III and IV classes, as well as experience working with kids through my youth

group at church.

Q: What advice would you give to students when they graduate?

A: Wow, I would say whatever your pursuit is, when you get to college or get a job, just do your best. Put forth your best effort and don't give up. Not everyday will be an easy day but keep your head up and your dream close within reach.

Mathematics Instructor at NYSSD

Submitted by Sarah Davis



Q: What is your name?

A: Janet Wilson.

Q: What do you do at NYSSD?

A: I am the math teacher for high school students.

Q: How did you become a math teacher?

A: I had majored in math at college and have loved it ever since. I then went to graduate school to become a "teacher of the deaf."

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NYSSD

Q: How did you find out about your job at NYSSD before you were hired?

A: Well, I applied to all the schools for the deaf in the northeast. Then, I had two interviews at NYSSD and at the American School in Connecticut. I loved Rome better because it was in the country and I prefer the country over the city.

Q: What inspired you to work at NYSSD?

A: I have a brother who is deaf. He is one year younger than me and we were close growing up.

Q: How long have you worked at NYSSD?

A: I have worked here for thirty-six years.

Q: What classes or work experience did you have to prepare you for your job?

A: To be a high school teacher, you need to have certification in your area. I got a degree in education and high school math. Also, I had to intern as a math teacher.

Q: What advice would you give to students when they graduate?

A: Don't give up and continue your education. You have to work hard because you will be competing in the hearing world.

Dormitory Parent at NYSSD

Submitted by Ashley Dupuis



Q: What is your name?

A: My name is Susan Sharpsteen. Most of my family member and friends call me Susie. My mom's middle name is Susan, so she named me Susan. My middle name is Dorothy, and Dorothy is my mom's first name.

Q: What do you do at NYSSD?

A: I am a houseparent. I work on committees, and I am the assistant coach of the girl's basketball team.

Q: How did you find out about your job at NYSSD before you were hired?

A: I knew about NYSSD through my husband, he graduated here. He now is an alumni. I met my husband at Gallaudet University, and he graduated first, and came home and found a job. I graduated at Gallaudet one year later. Then my husband found a job opening here for me and I applied, and was hired.

Q: What inspired you to work at NYSSD?

A: I just wanted to come and work here. But what inspires me here at NYSSD is to watch the students grow and to be able to teach them to be successful in life.

Q: How long have you worked at NYSSD?

A: I have worked here for 19 years.

Q: What classes or work experience did you have to prepare you for your job here?

A: My college degree is in Recreational Therapy. I was required to take recreational courses, psychological courses, and other classes. My education is directly applied to my job by working with kids.

Q: What advice would you give to students when they graduate?

A: To take the right path and make the right decision. Think of what is best for you after you graduate. Learn to accept your mistakes and to fix them. It will help you be better. Always be learning every day!



Ashley Dupuis, Brian Borden, & Sarah Davis

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NYSSD

Black History Presentation

Submitted by Jean Jackson



Nancy Quance and Jean Jackson's classes honored those Black Americans who greatly contributed to our country in honor of Black History Month. Nancy Quance and Jean Jackson's classes consist of Arif Cajic, Ella Kovaleva, Darlene Martin, Asia Bohlen, Evan Hawkins, Nathaniel Hoose, Harland Oldick, and Cody Sharpsteen. Each student presented on one of the following Black Americans: Frederick Douglas, Harriet Tubman, George Washington Carver, Louis Armstrong, Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, Martin Luther King and Michael Jordan. Austin Howard, a high school student, sang a

beautiful rendition of "Amazing Grace" and Vicky Stockton-Allen led verses from the song "Follow the Drinking Gourd" throughout the presentation.

The fifth graders narrated the story of the Drinking Gourd. The fifth grade class consists of Abigail Anzalone, Ka Dil, Mathew Heinlein, Alen Kendic, Yousef Sawaqed and Roseanna Wright. After the individual presentations and song, Darlene Martin gave a tribute to our first Black President – Barack Obama. Then a beautiful poem was presented entitled "I Too" by Langston Hughes. The poem was directed by Vicky Stockton and led by Darlene, Asia and Harland with assistance from Ella, Evan, Cody, Arif and Nathaniel. Austin Howard ended the presentation by playing "Amazing Grace" on his clarinet while the other children signed the song which of course was led by our talented music teacher, Vicky Stockton-Allen.

All of the students did a fantastic job for this very special Black History Celebration. Their hard work showed and their teachers are very proud of them. Congratulations to all!



Nickels, Dimes, Pennies, & Soda Cans To Help Animals In Need

Submitted by Miss Stephanie Tooke, Social Studies Instructor



Miss Stephanie Tooke's social studies classes have adopted year-long community service projects. The projects are teaching the students qualities of community citizenship and supporting the year-long Social Skills Committee theme, "I Can Make a Difference."

The 8th grade class has been collecting items for the Rome Humane Society. Several boxes have been placed throughout the campus, where they hold special treasures for needy animals. Staff and students alike have graciously given toys, blankets, food, litter and other items to help make the lives of these homeless little creatures a little brighter, as they anxiously wait to find the next pair of warm and loving arms.

Word of the 8th grade class community service project has touched the hearts of many here at NYSSD. Through the humble generosity of the Maintenance Staff, who donated their soda cans, the 8th grade class was able to collect \$21 towards purchasing more items for the Humane Society. A special "Thank You" needs to be honored to the Maintenance Staff, Rose Poland, and the 8th graders for all of their hard work.

The 8th grade class will continue to collect items for the Humane Society for the remainder of the school year. With the help and support of everyone here at NYSSD, we can make a difference in the lives of needy animals. Let's work together to help make their lives a little brighter!

High School Boys Dormitory

NYSSD Beth Wenzel

If you live in Central New York, you know that most likely you are in for a lengthy, bitter winter. This year has been no exception, and as can be expected, the High School Boys' Dormitory has suffered a collective case of cabin fever. What is the solution then when it is just too chilly to blow off some steam outside and the novelty of the new school year in the dorm has all but worn off?

Fortunately, there is a place for our students to go on those days where they are able to participate in myriad healthy, productive activities: the local YMCA. Within a block of our school lies this facility, and thanks to our Recreation Therapist, Dennis Ryan, NYSSD has partnered with the YMCA to allow for reciprocal use of facilities. As a result, our students have been able to enjoy nearly unlimited use of the YMCA and all it has to offer, including the exercise equipment, swimming pool, and racquetball rooms.

At least a few times per week throughout the winter, residential staff members and groups of high school boys have been bundling up in boots and hats to take the brisk trek over to the YMCA in order to make the most of this great partnership. Whether it is swimming laps in the perfectly heated pool, mastering the rules of racquetball, running on the treadmills or learning the basics of strength training from our own Child Care Aide Sandor Sarus, the high school boys can frequently be seen getting in a good workout. Not only has this helped lessen the effects of cabin fever, but also some valuable lessons have been learned in the process. Students work on socializing with peer and adult members of the community when playing basketball or sharing a lap lane in the pool, they practice teamwork when playing two on two games of racquetball, and have learned some new, fun ways to get some exercise during the long days of winter.

The students and staff are grateful for the opportunities afforded to them by the partnership with the YMCA and plan to continue making productive use of it throughout the rest of the winter and spring.

Learning to Sew in the Dormitory

Submitted by Melinda Magliocca

Along with the continued work on the 1 million pillowcase project, some high school girls are also learning to hand sew. They are drawing their own design on a felt square and then using embroidery thread (which Skippy donated, thanks Skippy) to learn some hand stitching techniques. Some of the stitches that they are learning about are: the back stitch, stem stitch, chain stitch, and also how to sew on buttons. The felt square will later be made into a small pillow that the girls can proudly display in their rooms.



THE NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

401 Turin Street Rome, NY 13440

315-337-8400 (V) 315-337-8489 (TTY)

nyssd@mail.nysed.gov (email)

To: