



Above, the corn eating contest. Below, the corn shucking contest.



Minisink's First Corn Festival a Success

On Sept. 13 the Kiwanis club of Minisink Valley held its first annual Sweet Corn Festival on beautiful farm in the Black Dirt region of Orange County.

Admission was just \$10 per carload. More than 900 people came out to enjoy a fantastic day of events which included live music all day, sweet corn ice cream, a 2-acre corn maze, a 100-foot by 50-foot small corn maze for the wee little ones, a sweet corn eating contest, a sweet corn shucking contest, dancing, free books for all ages, a petting zoo, crafts, a hay bale maze, more than 25 vendors and more sweet corn related food than you could eat.

Next year's festival will be on Sunday Sept. 11. Vendors and sponsors are welcome. For more information please visit us at www.ocsweetcorn.com.

Youth Protection

Jim Mancuso



Based on a program I recently saw at a club meeting, it occurred to me, drug abuse equals child abuse. Think about it, adults sell drugs to children. Children sell drugs to children. So, we need to add drug abuse to the list of abuses perpetrated on our children. Drug abuse is an entirely different and overlooked angle on the topic of youth protection.

Where do children get their drugs? There are many sources: other students in their school, old prescriptions left in medicine cabinets, older peers, brothers, sisters, dealers, even parents, known "curb service" drug areas in the city or dope houses, your child's workplace, legal

over-the-counter diet pills, caffeine pills (No Doz, Vivarin), cough medicine (i.e. Robitussin) and other drugs, through magazine subscriptions and, of course, there are always channels over the Internet or drugs are only a text away on their cell phones.

The club in my division that gave the program was Massapequa Kiwanis. They have started a drug awareness program in their school district. Their program centers around the publication of a book for parents titled "A Parent's Guide for the Prevention of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Use." The book has information on the various forms of drug abuse so a parent can be pre-emptive and spot the signs of child drug abuse, hopefully before it can reach the addiction level.

Parents received the book for free and can also download the "Drug Guide for Parents" app for free as well. This Massapequa Kiwanis' message will be infused into other school presentations throughout the school year, such as the district's mandatory parent/athlete meetings to reinforce the importance of substance abuse prevention.

This quote from Dr. Thomas Fasano, assistant to the superintendent for cur-

riculum and instruction in the Massapequa School District says it all: "We want parents to walk out of their child's school armed with the information they need to keep their children safe, and to have the knowledge they need to start the conversation, or even detect a problem and be able to find the right resources. This problem keeps growing ... we hear on the news almost every day a new, cheap, easy-to-obtain synthetic drug or even prescription drugs that are wreaking havoc in our communities. Parents and the entire school community need to partner together."

I applaud Massapequa Kiwanis club's effort to raise the awareness level of child drug abuse. Child abuse prevention's greatest weapon is awareness. Awareness of the signs and the situations where child abuse occurs helps us to act before it happens. Awareness is also the greatest tool to protect our children from the horrors of illegal drug usage too. I hope this information helps you to protect against this form of child abuse and might also inspire you to follow the Massapequa Kiwanis example to promote child drug abuse awareness in your community.