

Parents Make Their Way Through MS At Open House

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Hicksville Middle School hosted its annual open house on Thursday, Sept. 24. The night began in the auditorium where Principal Mara Jorisch welcomed parents and introduced school supervisors and chairpersons along with the PTSA president. Jorisch referred to herself as the “very, very proud principal of the middle school.” She encouraged those who had not yet signed up for the Power School online program to do so as soon as possible to keep updated on their children’s progress and receive paperless report cards. Two locations for registering with Power School were made available during the open house.

Jorisch also spoke about the various clubs and events that are offered in the middle school. She said that those students who participate actively during the year will have an opportunity to attend an overnight trip.

“Our motto is heart plus motivation equals success,” she said.

Jorisch pointed out the various communication mediums available—from email to the website to Power School, to phone calls—available for parents to stay in touch with faculty and administration.

“We look for a partnership with you,” said Jorisch.

The purpose of the open house or back to school night, as it is also known, was for parents to meet their children’s teachers. Following the school’s B schedule, parents navigated the building, changing classes every nine minutes with four minutes to get from one class to another. Ushers were on hand to assist people in finding their way around. Parents visited all eight of their children’s classes with a break for the lunch period.

Each teacher had a sign-up sheet for those who attended. Although the open house was not designed as a parent/teacher conference (that could



Parents navigate their way through the middle school.

be arranged through Guidance at a later date), teachers took the opportunity to explain their grading systems, how missed work can be made up, and the days and times they offered

extra help. Most of them also indicated how parents could locate their web page on the school’s website where assignments and test dates are posted regularly.

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And even after the owner’s retirement was revealed, Torres and Shaneberger said they still never received a phone call from the Inn alerting them to the possibility that the venue of their choice might not even exist in 2016. It wasn’t until last month when they found Plainview’s Sheila Doherty’s Facebook page “Save the Milleridge” that they were clued into the situation.

“No one contacted me so I thought it was business as usual,” said Shaneberger. “Then I saw the Facebook page and panicked. I called them right away, but they couldn’t answer any of my questions. They were very nice, but I could tell they were withholding information.”

With that, Shaneberger’s husband went to the Milleridge Inn unannounced in search of information.

“He kind of ambushed them. The secretary was flustered, but again, very nice,” said Shaneberger. “I can’t blame the employees, because it seems like they didn’t even know the situation or if they would even have jobs in 2016. It seems very unprofessional on the owners’ part.”

The Milleridge Inn did not return requests for comment.

David Bujnicki, Kimco’s vice president of investor relations and communications, said the realty firm is actively another potential operator for the site and they also have plans to

Michelle Torres planned to hold an event in the Milleridge cottage.



hear the community’s concerns in a forum setting.

“Kimco acquired The Milleridge Inn property this past spring and subsequently leased the property back to the current owner who was seeking to retire shortly thereafter but wanted to fulfill his prior customer commitments,” said Bujnicki, of the New Hyde Park-based realty firm. “This arrangement provided him with the opportunity to continue to operate this fine establishment without any disruptions in service until his retirement at year end. Kimco is actively looking for another potential operator for the site. As soon as we

have additional details, we will be happy to share them.”

But what 2016 holds for the Milleridge remains a mystery. Shaneberger was able to change her daughter’s Sweet 16 to December of this year, guaranteeing a spot at the catering hall. Torres, on the other hand, had to cancel her daughter’s Bat Mitzvah and take back her deposit, leaving her at square one and in her search of a new venue.

“We went to so many catering halls last year looking for the perfect spot and the Milleridge Inn was right in our price range,” she said. “Other places have dates available, but they

are really out of our budget. We’re still looking.”

Plainview’s Sheila Doherty said her Facebook page, “Save the Milleridge,” has grown in popularity mainly because Long Islanders do not want to see this place of such local historic significance bulldozed into something similar to the neighboring Jericho Commons, a strip mall also owned by Kimco.

“I am hopeful that [Kimco] is realizing that destroying the Milleridge Inn would really upset people,” she said. “We’re going to hold a meeting for supporters, but the details are still being finalized.”

Shaneberger and Torres both said that what was most upsetting was finding out about this on Facebook, rather than with a call from the Milleridge Inn—an act they think would have been common courtesy.

“I don’t know why it was so hush hush,” said Shaneberger. “It seems like the owners didn’t even tell the employees the details. It’s heartbreaking to see history being shut down and pushed aside. The owner wants to retire and that is his right, but I really hope someone steps up to take over.”

Torres said to lose a place that so many generations of Long Islanders have utilized would be a travesty—especially if it’s lost to another strip mall.

“The last thing Long Island needs is another strip mall,” she said. “I hope it stays and maybe new owners can spruce it up a little bit.”