

RED RIBBON WEEK

DeSoto County Schools as well as schools throughout America celebrated Red Ribbon Week October 21-31. The figure behind the red ribbon symbol is Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, a police officer working with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, who believed that one person can make a difference. The 37 year old undercover agent, while investigating a major drug cartel, disappeared after five men shoved him in a car and sped away. One month later, Camarena's body was found in a shallow grave. He had been tortured to death.

In honor of his memory and battle against illegal drugs, friends, neighbors and later anti-drug coalitions began wearing red badges of satin. Since the National Family Partnership organized the first Nationwide Red Ribbon Campaign in 1988, children all over American have been a part of activities celebrating the week and expressing the need to prevent illegal drug use.

During the week each school conducted anti-drug activities around the 2009 theme, **"The Key is to be Drug Free"**. To start off the celebration, on October 21st, all students and faculty members received stickers to wear and red and white balloons and banners were exhibited at each school. The children at the Early Childhood center received activity booklets and Dr. Sharon Goodman, Principal discussed with the students the meaning of red ribbon week and how they must choose to be drug free in their lives.

West Elementary designated special days such as "Sock It to Drugs Day," Give Drugs the Slip Day," Don't let Drugs Sneak up on you" and "Put a Cap on Drugs". Each day the students would wear something that went with the theme. The students wore crazy socks, slippers, sneakers or caps from their favorite team to match the day. Memorial Elementary wore red one day, had red food to eat in the cafeteria (i.e. strawberries, pasta with RED sauce), and had a "Make a goal and Be Drug Free" day and a poster contest. The winners in each grade level were: Kindergarten - Nyla Rivers; 1st grade- Emma Carroll, 2nd grade – Cheyenne Torres; 3rd grade – Patrick Hilaire; 4th grade - Lillian Bolyard and 5th grade - Madison Mofield. Nocatee placed banners around the school, gave out red bracelets and held a wear red day. Mrs Dunshee's kindergarten class won the wear red day with 100% participation. Mrs. Cassidy's class drew pictures of children participating in fun activities and added them to their wall decoration that read "Instead of Doing Drugs I Like to...".

DeSoto Middle School and DeSoto High School were offered a multi-media contest in which prizes were given to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. The entry could be 2-D or 3-D as long as it was able to fit into a 3ft X 3ft X 3ft space and depicted the theme for the year. Winners at the middle school were: 1st place – Kaylyn Smith, grade 7; 2nd place – Brian Pelham, grade 7 and 3rd place – Elizabeth Uriarte, grade 7. Each day anti-drug facts were announced at the Middle School by Mr. Mead's media class.

Prizes were provided by Drug-Free DeSoto, The Safe and Drug-Free School Program and Subway. Thanks to all that contributed to the success of Red Ribbon Week.

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Student Services