

MLK Day

State Sen. teaches at Tiogue

Harold Metts offers kids a glimpse of MLK's life, work

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COVENTRY — For the second year, last week Senator Harold Metts made a visit to the third-grade class at the Tiogue Elementary School to share some of King's story about spreading the message of love and equality for all.

"It's more than celebrating a holiday, it's keeping the focus on the many things he believes and how we still are in such desperate need of those things because we so need to spread the word of love in the world and shake out all the negativity," Metts said.

He used the movie Star Wars to talk about the evil in the world today comparing good and evil to the film series' light side of the force and the dark.

Metts, who also serves as a church pastor, shared a story of his childhood and how things were very different for him then.

"I can remember being five years old and riding on a train, which was integrated, but when we arrived in Washington, D.C., things were segregated," he said. "I was in high school when King was active and when the people had the water hoses turned on them. I should have the same rights as anyone else, and women should get the same pay rate as a man and we do want to remember King's dream."

Metts said it's okay to not agree on every issue but people can disagree and not be hateful.

"We're here to promote good will and justice and that's the battle we all fight and that's the battle Dr. Martin Luther King fought, and every American should be treated fairly," he said. "We need to close that gap between his dream and reality and what is in the Constitution."

Metts admitted he doesn't like people who hate.

"I just don't have the time for that and King didn't have the time either," he said. "He wanted us to be kind and love one another."

He pointed out how even God's commandments say love one another.

"If I say I love God, then I have to love others," he said.

Austin Lillie, a third-grader, pointed out what he knew about Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott story.

"She wanted to sit wherever she wanted to sit in the white section of the bus, but she wasn't allowed to and wouldn't give

Metts talks MLK at Tiogue

Continued from Page A-1

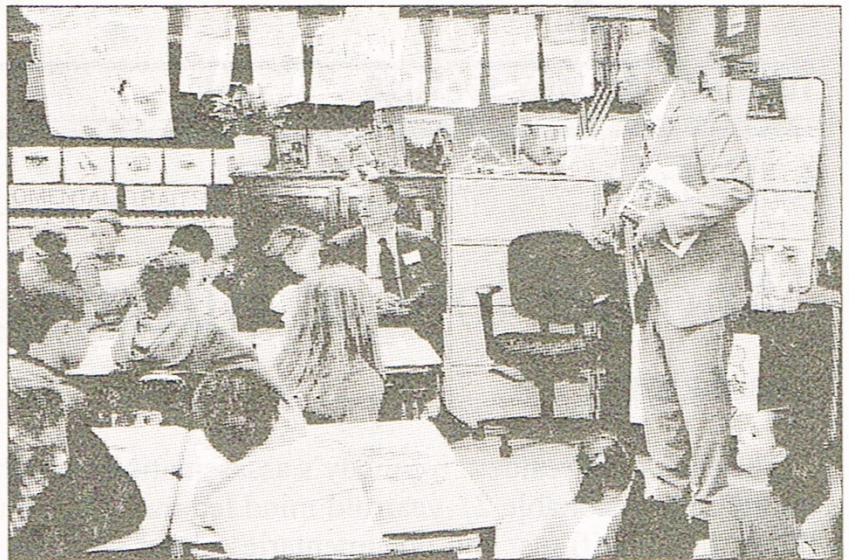
up her seat so she was arrested,” Lillie said. “It wasn’t fair.”

Metts explained how that also points out another lesson in stopping any wrongdoing that a person witnesses.

“If we see something evil, we need to do something about it, or it’s like we’re a part of it,” said the Senator.

He praised the children for taking the time to listen to him speak and encouraged them to continue to do great work.

“You’ve all been given a gift and you have to share that gift with the world,” he said. “You have to use that gift to make this world a better place.”



Kendra Leigh Miller • Daily Times

State Senator Harold Metts (far right) addresses a class at Coventry's Tiogue Elementary School, detailing King's legacy.