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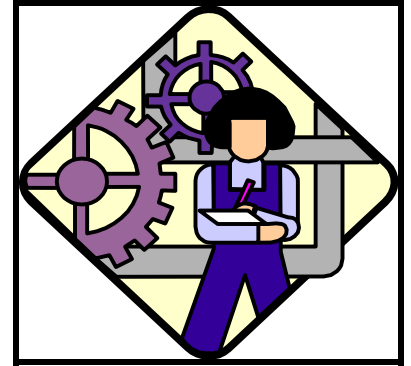
PPO

November 2005

CONNECTIONS

The quick details on what's
happening at the Bergen County Academies

Log on to our web site: www.academyppo.com



President's Message

The times, they are a-changing', or so says the song. I suppose we could apply this statement to any era, and perhaps we *should* apply this to any era, lest we become stagnant in our thoughts and actions. The PPO, like everyone and everything else, needs to be responsive to these changin' times.

In an attempt to do so, we recently held our first PPO work session to reach out to you, our members, for ideas, dialogue, and constructive criticism. Traditionally, our PPO meetings are administrative in nature, and because of a more business-like format and auditorium venue, tend to be informative, yet somewhat impersonal. We, the PPO executive board, feel that we'd like to see a more hands-on approach with more interaction and input from you. We want to find out what you *really* think of our meetings, of our organization, of our activities. We need to ask the difficult questions, and hear — really hear — your honest responses.

You didn't disappoint us with your feedback. The message that you reiterated at our round-table discussion was the need for communication at so many different levels. You stressed communication between the PPO board and parents, between the administration and parents, between faculty and parents. You'd like the opportunity to hear more about what's happening at BCA, about your child's academy, curriculum, and electives. You want to be involved, but need to feel welcomed in order to take that first step.

We have a lot of work to do. At your suggestion, the PPO will make a more concerted effort to have meaningful class-specific and academy-specific meetings for parents in order to deal with issues pertinent to those groups. We'll continue to work closely with the Academy administration to voice your concerns. We will attempt to institute a parent "buddy" system for freshman families so that they might turn to upperclass families for guidance and support. You told us that social events for families at the class level are important to you, and we're determining how best to implement these. You'd like to see agendas before our meetings and perhaps have some input in that area, so we will attempt to post our agendas in a timeframe that will allow your feedback. Lastly, you suggested that we institute a question board on our website. We are working on the logistics of this and hope to establish this soon.

All are excellent ideas. This is *your* organization; the PPO board is merely the implementation team for your suggestions. We are here to serve you, and without your input, the PPO cannot move forward to meet your needs. We promise to provide you, our constituents, with venues for dialogue, but we need your promise to continue to offer to us your opinions and honest feedback. We are a team, and we need every parent in this community to join the club. Come play with us.

Be well,
Nancy Lagomarsino

Calendar Highlights

- November 23 **Half Day**
November **NO SCHOOL**
24-25 Thanksgiving Recess
December 1 **Fall Sports Award Dinner,**
6:30 PM, Garfield
December 4 **Open House, 11AM and 2PM**
December 9 **Nutcracker**
December 13 **Half Day for Students**
December 20 **Holiday Concert, 7:30PM**
December 23 **Half Day,**
Winter Recess Begins
Senior-Alumni Breakfast
December 26-
January 2 **NO SCHOOL**
January 4 Winter Recess
Senior Financial Aid Meeting,
7:00 (snow date Jan. 10)
January 16 **NO SCHOOL**
Martin Luther King Day
January 18 **PPO General Meeting, 7:30PM**
January 21-22 **Admissions Testing for**
Incoming Freshman

**Check our monthly calendar
for more times and events!**

Our next issue will be published on January 18, 2006.

Please submit all February calendar entries to Amrita Singh at AmritaS2@aol.com or at Amrita.Singh@experian.com by January 2, and all articles to Marianne Bente at CM2D@optonline.net by January 9. Thank you.

Holiday Greetings

Since there will be no December issue of *Connections*, the PPO would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a beautiful winter holiday with peace, relaxation, and precious time with family and friends. We look forward to the rejuvenation that a new year brings and to the many special times that await us at the Academies in the new year.

Snow Days

Be sure to log on to www.academyppo.com for breaking news regarding snow closings. Media sources for the latest updates are 1010 WINS and 1160 WVNJ (AM radio), and News 12 Cable TV.

Message from the International Dinner Committee

A big thank you to all PPO members who participated in the International Dinner October 15! We would like to extend a special "THANKS" to the table coordinators, Sookyung Hahn, Meryle Rabinowitz, Miriam Levin, Laliitha Ramakrishnan, Rama Kotadia, Maria Ackerman, and Qiuyue Huan Lin.

If we have left anyone out, it is not intentional and we sincerely appreciate your generosity and efforts. Lastly, a really big "THANK YOU" to all those parents who helped with the set up and clean up, especially those of you who willingly pitched in for both.

Amy Chong, Meg McNicholas, Roseanne Colletti Harris
Dinner Committee

In Need of *Connections* Help!

Do you know Microsoft Word? Can you cut and paste electronically? Would you like to keep your finger on the pulse of what's happening around the Academies? If so, we have a job for you!

The *Connections* team needs an assistant editor, someone who can reach out to members of the Academy community and gather articles for our monthly newsletter. Articles are then edited for syntactic accuracy, format consistency, and grammatical content and passed on to our editor for layout.

For more information, contact Marianne Bente at cm2d@optonline.net.

FALL Sports Notes



Fall Varsity Awards dinner is December 1st, 6:30 PM at the Cotillion, 454 Midland Avenue, Garfield, N.J. Proper attire is required.

JV/Frosh Awards night: November 17th, upstairs cafeteria, 7:00 PM.

Parent-Faculty Fishbowl

Join us for the PPO's first Parent-Faculty "fishbowl" on Thursday, November 17, from 2:00-3:30 pm. Participate in our dialogue and help us to promote communication between parents and teachers.

Our seniors are making their final choices for college ...

and now it is time to think about saying goodbye.

The 2006 yearbook *REFLECTIONS* is well on its way to reality. It will be delivered in early June with over 176 pages, including a 32 page color senior section. This new yearbook includes many pages reflecting the life of all seven academies and all classes 2006-2009. We usually gain enough support to generate over sixteen pages of ads. Right now, there is plenty of room for your ad, however ad space is taken quickly.

For more information or to place an ad, go to:
http://www.bergen.org/ACADEMY/Bio/YB/ADS/AD_FOR_Ads_2006pg1.html.

Project Graduation '06

We have received 210 payments in full to date.

Please send/email t-shirt size and shoe size for your seniors, if you have not done so already.

Our next meeting will be scheduled in the new year.

Send checks/info to: Karen Sanchez, 50 Danna Way, Saddle Brook, 07663.

Questions?

Marina Hozumi 201-796-1533, mhozumi@aol.com;

Karen 201-796-6257 KarenJrMac@aol.com

Go KNIGHTS!

The fall season has been sparked with lots of enthusiasm and school spirit around the three campuses. Parents, students and teachers have been supporting the games and our athletic program. Students have been sporting the KNIGHTS apparel! It's great to see this sense of PRIDE in the Bergen Tech Athletic Program. If you haven't already joined the Booster Club, please do. We continue to sell the apparel throughout the year. We welcome new ideas or comments!

Rose Marie Ranuro

*President of the Bergen Tech Knights
Parent Booster Club*

Class News

Class of 2006: *The Art Auction is Friday, November 18 at 7 pm in the BCA gym — please attend to help us raise funds!
*The Open House Bake Sale is Sunday, November 20 — please bring baked goods to the Upstairs Cafeteria between 10 am and 11 am. *Please return the form detailing how your child's name should appear on his or her diploma by December 1st!

Class of 2007: *Thank you to all the bakers who helped to make the Open House a huge success. *The Class of 2007 T shirts are still available and will make great holiday gifts. Order one today. *Thank you to all the parents who volunteered to be on the Senior Advisory Committee. *The Innisbrook Wrap Sale will be distributed to the students before Thanksgiving. If there is a problem with your order or you did not receive your order please contact us as soon as possible. *Have a Peaceful Holiday Season, Mary Ann Hoogerheyde and Hope Anne LoGalbo

Class of 2009: *Congratulations to the new student council officers! *Our first activity for the class of 2009 was a bake sale on Monday, November 11. *A phone chain is being created to inform parents of important events at the Academies. We are asking all parents to help effectively execute this phone chain. You should have received a telephone call telling you the details. If there are any questions please email Diane Valladares at dvalla1999@aol.com. *Please look for a letter/order sheet being sent home with your child regarding this year's Nutcracker hosted by the Irine Fokine Ballet company. It has been customary for the freshmen class to attend this performance that takes place in the Academy auditorium. The event will be Friday, December 9th during the school day. The ticket cost is \$15. Those who do not attend will go to their regularly scheduled class. Freshmen are encouraged to attend this traditional performance of the Nutcracker. Checks (no cash please) should be made out to the Student Activity Fund and returned with the permission slip to Kerri Hubbard in the Guidance Department, room 101B.

Cultural Connections...

Theatre Arts News



As we move toward the end of the first trimester students are involved in a myriad of varied theatre arts activities. The fall play, *An Experiment With An Air Pump*, helped to generate a dialogue throughout the school community on current bio-ethical questions with performances on November 4 and 5 and an assembly on Nov. 1. At the assembly panelists Dominic Sisti, bio - ethicist from The University of Pennsylvania, Harlem Hospital Genetics Chief, Dr. Nellie Oundjian, and award winning playwright, Robert Clyman discussed issues raised by the play with cast members AP Biology and GLE students.

In their theatre classes, AVPA students rehearse and prepare scenes, monologues and benchmark activities for end of trimester acting class assessments, study the dialects of faculty members invited to voice and speech classes, move toward presentations and “mock auditions” in dance classes, revise original scripts in their playwriting class and write essays and work together in collaborative performance projects for theatre history classes. We took our first four-grade, theatre field trip to The Jean Cocteau Classic Theatre in New York to see Euripides’ *Medea* which was a wonderful enhancement for the study of ancient Greek Theatre, an essential part of the Theatre History I curriculum.

Students in all academies are moving toward culminations in the two projects offered by the theatre department: World Dance and Musical Theatre Workshop. Grounded in rigorous

physical and textual work, the World Dance project which will culminate during the school day on November 30, has afforded students the opportunity to research, teach, learn and work collaboratively to explore movement/dance expression in a variety of cultural contexts. Working with guest-teaching/artist Jennifer Little, students in the Musical Theatre Workshop will culminate in an evening cabaret performance in the BCA auditorium on Tuesday November 29 at 7:30 p.m.; family and friends are encouraged to attend.

An additional Music/Theatre Wednesday project, Pit Orchestra, is well into it’s rehearsal process for our 2006 musical, *Pippin*. Singing, dance and acting auditions for *Pippin* are currently taking place: dance auditions are scheduled for Monday, November 21st 4:10-6:30, on stage and call-backs for readings on Tuesday November 22nd, also after school. The Choreographic, Concept Team has been working for several weeks with *Pippin* director Victoria Pero to create a unique concept for the BCA production. Cast lists and crew assignments will be posted before the end of Trimester I. Students interested in creating the set for *Pippin* should sign-up for the Stagecraft elective.

Students not involved in *Pippin* but who would like to take an elective in acting should sign up for the elective, *Acting Methods* which will meet at the end of the day on Mondays and Thursdays.

— Dr. Rebecca Strum

Visual Arts Notes

Sophomore visual majors are busy preparing their Youth Art Month Flag Designs for state and national competitions. Two flag designs will be offered from our school. Stay tuned for the results!

The pencil drawings of two Academy students (one from AAST and one from Visual) have been chosen for the fall exhibit at NJPAC in Newark. Please seek them out should you have the occasion to visit this grand performance arena.

— Joann Onnembo

Math Team Boosters

On October 18th, the Board of Education recognized the superior accomplishments of Mr. Joe Holbrook and the Math Team. Thank you to the many parents who chaperoned our team members to the Board offices in Paramus. In his remarks to the Board, Mr. Holbrook noted the team has earned national acclaim, but the most rewarding part of being associated with math team is the opportunity to watch our children grow from rookies to top flight competitors, with upperclassmen mentoring lower-classmen.

After nearly a year of preparation, the BCA Math Competition on October 23rd was a resounding success. It appears the third time was a charm, as things ran so smoothly, one would have thought we were a professional testing organization. Math team members set up a new online registration system, wrote the tests for every level from grades 4 through 8, administered, proctored, and graded them, and awarded the prizes at an assembly of a thousand attendees. Many many parent volunteers worked countless hours behind the scenes as well as pitching in the day of the event. Far too many to list here, but a special word of gratitude goes out to those who were in their final year of boosters' involvement: Monica Carsky, Soon & Hyun Choi, Zhe & Xidong Feng, Bill Kennedy, Fay Sharit, and Sue Ton. We couldn't have done it without your seasoned experience!

— Sharon Drucker

PAPA Updates

CHANGE OF MEETING DATE:

Due to an unanticipated conflict, the PAPA meeting of Nov. 29 has been changed to **December 1, 7:30-9 P.M.**, in the downstairs cafeteria. This will be a regular working meeting. Please join us on Dec. 1, as we will be discussing many plans for this year. Dr. Finley's talk to the parents will be rescheduled to a date in 2006.

ARE YOU ON PAPA'S MAILING LIST?

All members should have received an invitation to join the PAPA email mailing list. Our email list is the primary way we communicate about important issues in between meetings. If you are a member and are not receiving PAPA emails, please contact Merri Neidorff, merri@neidorff.com, 201-967-8643.

GUEST SPEAKERS GIVE INSIGHT INTO PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM

PAPA has been delighted to have Dr. Rebecca Strum and Mr. Michael Lemma speak to us in great detail at our last two meetings about the theater and instrumental music opportunities at the Bergen County Academies. The passion for teaching and for the performing arts that inspire these two fine teachers, and their dedication to their students, is evident in their curricula and in the extra hours each one spends with "their kids", whether perfecting a play or concert, helping students prepare for auditions, or just being an extra ear, or a shoulder to lean on. We are indeed fortunate to have these two caring and dedicated educators running the Theater and Music programs at BCA.

We look forward in the future to hosting Dr. Patrick Finley, the director of vocal music, and Ms. Victoria Pero, our new theater teacher. We invite all interested parents and students in the Bergen Academies community to join us for these talks and to meet the forces behind our school's superlative performing arts program.

PERFORMANCES AT BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES

PAPA congratulates Dr. Strum and the cast and crew of *An Experiment With An Air Pump*, the Fall play that was performed on Nov. 4 & 5. This compelling modern drama dealt thoughtfully with provocative issues, including medical ethics and the boundaries of scientific experimentation. Our student actors gave mature and nuanced performances, our student musicians performed a complex score composed by a current junior, and the student-constructed set was elegant and professional. Kudos to all involved.

PAPA urges everyone with an interest in music to attend BCA's two upcoming concerts: the Autumn Concert on November 16, featuring the concert band, orchestra, jazz ensemble, guitar and mandolin ensemble and the choir, plus a surprise; and the Holiday Concert on December 20, featuring the concert and select choirs, concert band, student composers and selected pianists. Please support our student musicians — you won't be disappointed!