

Vol. 8, No. 6

PPO

March 2006

# CONNECTIONS

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

Log on to our web site: [www.academyppo.com](http://www.academyppo.com)



## President's Message

Academy students are the best. We've all known that for a long time, but sometimes it takes a month like the one that's just passed to remind us of that. In the last few weeks, Academy students have stood up for what they believe, and have done it with eloquence and passion. They've stepped forward and spoken out with self-assurance, and with a determination to preserve what is near and dear to them. They have fought for a voice.

What we've witnessed in our children is the quality that sets them apart from others in "regular" schools; I believe it's the quality that directed them to these Academies in the first place. Our children have taken ownership of this community, and rightly so. This is the place that students have come to know and love, and they'll fiercely defend it.

Like nowhere else, I've seen students here embrace their school, wrap themselves up in it, and make it a part of their very being. Academy alumni, though now no longer physically a part of this school, and perhaps at a different level academically and socially, still consider these Academies their home, and retain ownership of them. This month they stood side-by-side with current students to voice their opinions and to show how much they care about this school. It will always be their school. In an almost inexplicable, intangible way this is a very special place to so many.

I'm so proud — both as a parent and as your PPO president — of these students. Our children are independent thinkers and self-assured young adults who are ready to defend their beliefs and take on the world. They show conviction and purpose, and do so with intelligence and passion. They are the Academies. The future is in good hands.

Be well,  
Nancy Lagomarsino

## Calendar Highlights

- March 24 **Academy Model United Nations 2006**, 1PM, Auditorium
- March 28 **Town Meeting**  
6:30-8:30PM
- April 5 **Class of 2008 Card Party**  
7PM, Gymnasium
- April 7 **Mission Boussou African Benefit Concert**, 7PM, Auditorium
- April 11 **PPO Program Meeting**  
7:30PM, Auditorium
- April 12 **Half Day**
- April 14 **NO SCHOOL**
- April 20 **NHS Induction Ceremony**  
(Junior Class)
- April 24-28 **NO SCHOOL** Spring Recess
- April 28-May 3 **DECA National Competition**  
Dallas

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

Our next issue will be published on April 19, 2006. Please submit all April calendar entries to Amrita Singh at [AmritaS2@aol.com](mailto:AmritaS2@aol.com) or at [Amrita.Singh@experian.com](mailto:Amrita.Singh@experian.com) & all articles to Barbara Borys at [BBB527@optonline.net](mailto:BBB527@optonline.net) by April 10. Thank you.

### **Next PPO Meeting:**

**April 11, 2006**

*7:30PM, Auditorium*

Please log on to [www.academyppo.com](http://www.academyppo.com) to ask your program-specific questions. The meeting agenda will be set from your input.

## Focus on the Faculty

The nominees for the Academy Award are: The Romance Chronicles, The Sports Banquet Videos, "Behind the Scenes", Day of Tolerance Video, Valentine's Day Assemblies. These special events and others are testaments to Academy students' strengths and talents and have been archived through the efforts of Scott Lang.

Scott's Academy career began ten years ago. He teaches all Video Production and Animation courses at the Academy. Scott also lends his talents to a variety of activities that help strengthen our sense of community. Scott's ability to engage all students, whether they are working on the project or watching themselves portrayed in the resulting

video, is why I am highlighting him this month. From the comedy of "Academy Clue" to the seriousness of the "September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial", Scott has the innate ability to connect with both students and faculty. His presentations are always anxiously anticipated and receive critical acclaim. In addition to his passion for documenting Academy life, Scott involves himself as an advisor for the Skills USA chapter and networks with ACM SIGGRAPH as co-chair of their 2006 conference. In his spare time, Scott enjoys cooking, photography and softball.

— Pat Cosgrove

### BCA to Host "Town Meeting"

On Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., the Academies will host a town meeting sponsored by the Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources. On that day, all across America, people will be talking about underage drinking at town meetings (21 in New Jersey alone). A panel of experts from law enforcement agencies and health professions will speak on the topic and will be on hand for a question and answer session. The moderator for the evening will be none other than our own Mrs. Roseanne Colletti-Harris, NBC news reporter and Academy parent.

Academy families, as well as other citizens from across Bergen County, are encouraged to attend.

Please see the enclosed flyer for more information, and join us on this important evening

### Changes to Scheduling Postponed

Mr. Robert Aloia, Superintendent of the Bergen County Academies, has announced that the proposed changes to the Academy schedule will not be implemented in the 2006-2007 school year. Instead, the scheduling task force will be expanded to include more representatives of the school community and will continue its exploration of the scheduling issue.

The PPO would like to thank all the parents and students who attended the special March 1<sup>st</sup> PPO meeting on this topic, and who voiced their opinions and concerns. Log on to [www.academyppo.com](http://www.academyppo.com) to see the meeting minutes and to view the PPO hand-out explaining the administration's rationale for and parents' concerns about the scheduling proposal.

### Program Meetings Back by Popular Demand

On Tuesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, the PPO will host our ever-popular program meetings. Brought back by popular demand, program meetings provide an opportunity for parents to meet by Academy to discuss issues unique to your focus group, and provide a venue for parents to meet other parents within your child's Academy.

In order to bring to you meaningful agendas and answers to the Academy-specific questions you might have, we have established an "Ask the PPO" input mechanism on our website, [www.academyppo.com](http://www.academyppo.com). We encourage you to visit this site and ask your program-specific questions via this window. The PPO, together with the Academy administration, will attempt to answer your questions, and will use these questions and answers as the basis for our program-meeting agendas on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Only questions submitted prior to the program meetings will be addressed at these meetings.

We encourage you to be a part of the Academy process and become familiar with the unique features of your child's program. Offer your questions and input, and join us on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

### Webmaster Needed

Do you have experience in web design? Have you been looking for an opportunity to help the PPO, but don't have much availability? Here's your chance! We're looking for a new webmaster for the 2006-2007 school year.

The new webmaster will work from home to post updates, PPO minutes, special notices, emergency information, etc. to the PPO website as needed. Come on board now to train with the current webmaster. For more information contact Nancy Lagomarsino at [NancyLago@aol.com](mailto:NancyLago@aol.com) or Bill Kennedy at [kennedy@fdu.edu](mailto:kennedy@fdu.edu).

**Class of 2006:**

\*\*The Class of 2006 sweatshirts, T-shirts, and sweatpants have finally arrived! Remind your child to look for messages and listen for announcements for pick-up information before the end of this month. \*\*Our committee has begun preparations for the Senior Prom, which will be held on Thursday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at Seasons. \*\*Please see the enclosed letter for preliminary information about the Class of 2006 Commencement, which will be held in the BCA auditorium on Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 p.m. More details will follow as this milestone date approaches! \*\*Project Graduation 2006 - Is Your Child Attending? It is with growing anticipation of this wonderful evening for your children that we ask you to please contact us (only if you have not already done so) with information regarding attendance of this event. If you have made no payment and sent us no note, we WILL ASSUME THAT YOUR CHILD WILL NOT ATTEND PROJECT GRADUATION. If you're unsure, please contact Karen Sanchez at 201-796-6257 or Marina Hozumi at 201-796-1533 ASAP. We are in the final planning stages, and need accurate counts for bookings. It would be a shame for your child to miss out on this fun-filled night with classmates. To date, we have 205 attending, most of which are paid in full. Thanks, and we look forward to hearing from you! Send payment to: Karen Sanchez, 50 Danna Way, Saddle Brook, NJ 07663.

**Class of 2007:**

\*\*The Class of 2007 organized a St. Patrick's Day fundraiser last week, holding a chocolate guessing contest entitled "Rooney's Pot of Gold — Guess the Number of Gold Coins!" The winner received the entire leprechaun pot filled with chocolate medallions. \*\*The Class of 2007's website has been redone! You can check it out at <http://www.bergen.org/ACADEMY/class2007/> for updated details and information

about class activities. \*\*The prom is to be held at the Windsor Gardens in Lodi on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Junior Prom bids will go on sale in mid-April. \*\*The Junior Showcase will be held April 6<sup>th</sup> in the Auditorium. \*\*We are in need of volunteers to help out with the Golf Outing. Please contact Sabrina Ganz at SABSTG@aol.com or 201-358-6501.

**Class of 2008:**

\*\*The Sophomore Semi-Formal will be held on Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at the Princess Chateau in Lodi. Tickets are currently on sale: \$50 for advance, \$60 at the door. \*\*Orders for "designer" Class of 2008 T-shirts will be going out soon. \*\*Our February Bake Sale brought in \$250. Thank you to all the bakers! \*\*We hope all parents will come out to support our class by attending the Card Party on Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Remember — no experience with card playing is necessary. It's a simple, round-robin style card game where you will get to move from table to table to meet many people. The tricky tray baskets and raffle prizes are fantastic! Many thanks to all of the '08 parents who have contributed so generously. The big raffle prizes include an Ipod with accessories and a digital camera. Please make reservations by March 28<sup>th</sup>. See the enclosed flyer or [www.academyppo.com](http://www.academyppo.com).

**Student Council:**

\*\*Thank you for all those who came to the Battle of the Bands 2006 on March 10<sup>th</sup>. It was a great success! Nine bands played and the crowd was amazing. Student Council would like to thank all its members, our advisor Ms. Mansfield, and all the chaperones who volunteered on Friday – thank you all. \*\*The week of March 27<sup>th</sup> is Spirit Week and the Pep Rally is on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Themes for Spirit Week will be announced in school.

**College Corner**

I have been meeting with the juniors in the College Resource Center to start them on the college application process. I will also meet with them again in June in order to help them complete all parts of the Common Application and to review information contained in the College Planning Handbook.

The Academy College Fair will be held in the Gymnasium on May 4, 2006 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Seventy-five colleges are already attending the Fair, and many more colleges are expected.

Terry Brockett  
Guidance Counselor/College Placement Coordinator  
Room 110, 201-343-6000 Extension 3313

## "Extra,Extra - Read all about it!"



The Bergen Tech Knights Parent Booster Club has recently hosted the 3rd Cheerleading Competition. Under the direction of Barbara von dem hagen, we were able to showcase the local towns' best cheerleaders and raise funds for our scholarship fund. A special thanks to Loraine Castro, our scorekeeper, Mrs. Hamberger, Mr. Barios, the BT Knights cheerleading moms, the custodians, Mrs. James, and our strong boys who volunteered to move the mats. Along with selling refreshments and having vendors sell their goods, everyone had a good time. Do you know what 100 cheerleaders sound like in a gym?

If you haven't joined the Booster Club, you still can for the spring season. Remember, in order to be considered for the scholarship you must to be a member. Please call Loraine Castro 201-342-7164 to join.

You still can purchase our apparel. We have sweatshirts, flags, shoulder bags, gym bags, and baseball caps. If you have a special request, please let me know. To order, please e-mail [rranuro@valleyhealth.com](mailto:rranuro@valleyhealth.com).

Don't forget to support our theme baskets during the winter varsity dinner.

**GO Knights!**

BCA Class of 2008 presents...



*"Capture the Flag"*

## Card Party



**Wednesday, April 5, 2006  
7 PM in the Academies Gymnasium**

**All parents, students, teachers, staff, family  
and friends are welcome!**

Come join us for an evening of cards, delicious refreshments, raffles, and prizes. We'll play a simple, sociable card game round-robin style. You'll learn the game on the spot and get to meet others in our Academies community. Cost is \$10 per person.

**Fabulous prizes:** Ipod \* Ipod accessories \* digital camera \* Ladies Seiko Watch \* \$50 gift certificates to Barnes & Noble \* \$75 Department Store Gift Certificate \* Dinner and Movie Tickets \* Themed Baskets \* Juicy Couture and many more!

See the enclosed flyer to register by March 28.  
Info also at [www.academypgo.com](http://www.academypgo.com).

Reservations: Lisa Murphy 201-944-2049 or  
[LisaMurphy3@yahoo.de](mailto:LisaMurphy3@yahoo.de)

## PPO Bylaw Amendments

At our January 18, 2006 General Meeting of the PPO, Mr. Rich Askins, member of the PPO Bylaws Committee, read several proposed revisions to the existing bylaws.

The purpose of the first proposed amendment is to create new officers, designated as First Vice President and Second Vice President. These shall replace the current Vice President and shall effect a redistribution and reconfiguration of the duties presently discharged by the Vice President.

Therefore, in Article 5, Section 2, the number of elected officers is changed from five (5) to six (6). Further in the first sentence, "Vice President" is deleted and is replaced by "First Vice President and Second Vice President."

In the first sentence of Article 6, Section 1, "Vice President" is deleted and is replaced by "First Vice President and Second Vice President."

In Article 6, Section 2, the second sentence is deleted and is replaced by the following:

"The First Vice President shall preside at all meetings in the absence of the President; shall be responsible for overseeing, communicating with and coordinating the operations of all Standing Committees; and shall perform such

other duties and act in such additional capacities as the President may request.

The Second Vice President shall preside at all meetings in the absence of the President and the First Vice President; shall be responsible for overseeing, communicating with and coordinating the operations of all Special Committees; and shall perform such other duties and act in such additional capacities as the President may request."

Additionally, a revision to Article 13 was read by Mr. Askins. The purpose of this amendment is to allow bylaw adoptions, amendments, or replacements by a two-thirds vote of the "Members of the Corporation" rather than by a two-thirds vote of the "Board of Trustees."

This represents a desire to place the responsibility and ownership of the PPO in the hands of its members rather than in the hands of a subset of the organization.

The aforementioned proposed bylaw amendments will be reread at the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the PPO and will be voted upon at that time.

For additional information regarding these proposed amendments, or for a copy of the existing bylaws, please contact any member of the PPO Executive Board.

## Math Team Boosters

The Harvard-MIT Math Tournament was hosted by Harvard University last month. All eight (!!!) of our teams did BCA proud. Most exciting – our first place finish in the prestigious "Guts Round." As usual, a great time was had by the students, who were able to soak up the Cambridge atmosphere, interact with college math majors, and meet other like-minded high school students. Many thanks to our parent chaperones, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Osborn, Mrs. Ramakrishnan, Mrs. Ton, Mr. & Mrs. Vidal, Mr. Weckstein and Dr. Yang.

The Math Team Boosters Club is extremely grateful to Mr. Negut and the following teachers who so generously gave of their time to accompany the team to HMMT: Dr. Abramson, Coach Holbrook, Dr. Mayers, Dr. Nevard and Dr. Robinson. Our children are most fortunate to attend a school with such a dedicated faculty!

An embarrassment of riches ... after the third round of the Mandelbrot Competition, the Math Team leads regionally and nationally in BOTH team and individual standings. Please visit [www.mandelbrot.org](http://www.mandelbrot.org) for a complete report.

If you stopped in at Mr. Holbrook's classroom on your way to the well attended March 11<sup>th</sup> Club meeting, you could not help but notice those impressive looking trophies. Many, many of our students placed highly in the Association of Math Teachers of NJ Competition. As a team, they have continued the BCA tradition of sweeping the state championship.

The American Invitational Math Examination was administered on March 7<sup>th</sup>. A substantial number of our students signed on for the alternate AIME on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, including all of our juniors who were otherwise occupied with the HESPA on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Best of luck to all, no matter which version was ultimately tackled!

— Sharon Drucker

## BattleBots Alert

The Titanium Knights Robotics team continues to work hard on preparations for the 2006 BattleBots National Competition April 26-30<sup>th</sup> in Miami, Florida. BattleBots IQ is a competitive physics robotic sport in which high school students learn about science and engineering through a robot building project. The program has the ultimate goal of creating more and better future engineers and scientists by generating excitement in engineering and making science and mathematics fun.

Along with our usual large class robots (120 lb.), we've expanded the program to include 15 lb. and 1 lb. robots and we have even held robot competitions on-site. We hope to continue with these smaller robots and possibly move into some autonomous projects in the near future. Additionally, plans for another in-house "Robot Rampage" have begun. For third trimester we have renamed the Wednesday project to "Robot and Design Decathlon" to further expand the possibilities of projects and competitions for the students. New opportunities for this term include West Point Bridge Building and the Boston University Design Competition.

Unfortunately, we are always in need of funds to keep these projects moving forward. Any help is greatly appreciated. Besides monetary donations, we accept donations of certain types of building materials, sheet metal, power tools, batteries and specialized hobby and robot components. Parent facilitators and chaperones are also the key to making these projects a reality. If you think you can help out, please contact Joe DeFalco at 201-343-6000 x2211 or [jdefalco@bergen.org](mailto:jdefalco@bergen.org). Donations by check can be made directly to the Student Activities Account—BattleBots and mailed to the Hackensack campus. For more information visit <http://www.bergen.org/BattleBots> and <http://www.bergen.org/AAST/Projects/>.

### Join Us! Academy Model United Nations 2006

Keynote Speaker: **William H. Swanson, Chairman and CEO of Raytheon Company**

We invite all students and parents to attend!

Date: March 24<sup>th</sup> 2006 • Time: 1:00pm • Place: BCA Auditorium

For more information about William H. Swanson and Academy Model United Nations please visit our web site at: [www.academymodelun.org](http://www.academymodelun.org)

Andrew Hermalyn • [andher@bergen.org](mailto:andher@bergen.org), Secretary General, AMUN

## Cultural Connections...

### Please Mark Your Calendars – “Improv Night” on March 31<sup>st</sup>

BCA’s Theatre Council will hold its first annual “Improv Night” at 7:30 p.m. in the new Theatre Arts Studio. In a “Whose Line Is It Anyway?” format, student performers will create scenes and characters with audience involvement. The \$5 tickets for this lighthearted, fun-filled evening go on sale in school the week of March 27<sup>th</sup> and will also be available at the door the evening of the show. Refreshments provided by the Performing Arts Parents Association will be available in the upstairs cafeteria before the show and during intermission. All profits support music, choir and theatre programs at the Academies



## YOUTH ART MONTH CELEBRATIONS!

March is the month selected by the Council of the Arts in Washington and the National and State Art Educators in which we celebrate Youth in Art. We are extremely fortunate this year to be part of those celebrations at the local, state and national levels.

*At the local level...*Our students’ work has been selected and is being exhibited at the Bergen Museum of Art & Science at the Bergen Mall, lower promenade, from now until March 30<sup>th</sup>, with a reception on the evening of March 16<sup>th</sup>. Please visit the museum and join us for the *reception*.

*At the state level...*Two students have had their thematic designs (“Art:No Limits, Just Edges”) chosen as state YAM flag winner and state commemorative invitation winner, respectively. Their designs were selected from a field that included all elementary and high school students in the State of NJ. They will receive awards at a reception on March 15<sup>th</sup> at the State House in Trenton. The winning designs can be viewed on [www.artsonia.com/schools/school.asp?id=3096](http://www.artsonia.com/schools/school.asp?id=3096) .... YAM Flag/ Poster.

*At the national level...*The winning flag designer will meet with Congressman Rothman, Senators Lautenberg and Menedez, along with students whose winning designs represent their home states in the “Flags Across America” ceremony at the Capitol on

March 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. The design has been sewn into a flag that represents NJ and will fly with all 50 states.

*Additionally...*Currently on exhibit in our own Gallery 121, Hackensack Campus... figure studies from Sophomore AVPA students.

Faculty artists are also being recognized by the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission in their Educator’s Exhibit. Scott Lang, Brenda Man and JoAnn Onnembo are exhibiting at the Flyaway Gallery, HMDC, DeKorte Plaza, (at the end of Valley Brook Avenue), Lyndhurst, NJ from March 2<sup>nd</sup> through 31<sup>st</sup>. All are welcome.

*Coming up...* we are preparing for the prestigious Congressional Exhibits. We will participate in those sponsored by Congressmen Steven Rothman and Scott Garrett. We look forward to continued success at these as well. Watch for an announcement of students and their chosen works!

Please support YOUTH ART MONTH by congratulating young artists as they endeavor to grow, develop their style and technique, and express themselves, or perhaps, by finding your own “youthful” artistic side. Doodling counts...painting the living room does not.

— JoAnn Onnembo

### **PAPA would like to THANK ...**

**Dr. Patrick Finley** for an informative and entertaining presentation at our meeting on February 28<sup>th</sup>. He discussed the extensive variety of choral opportunities available to the entire student body and told us about his journey to the Academies. We very much appreciate his taking the time to meet with us. Please also join us in sending good karma to everyone involved in the April 7<sup>th</sup> North American Music Festival competition!

**The Strong Voices of Reason** passionately articulated at both student and parent meetings with Superintendent Aloia on March 1<sup>st</sup> on the proposed schedule change. We are grateful to Nancy Lagomarsino and the PPO for arranging the parent forum. PAPA was well represented at the meeting – *and represented very well*. Please remain engaged as we work with the

Administration to improve the current schedule while retaining the high caliber and integrity we have all come to expect at the Academies.

**The Pippin Company** and each and every person involved both on stage and behind the scenes for the hard work and long hours devoted to staging the brilliant performances on March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. For fear of omitting someone, suffice it to say that the dedication of literally hundreds of students, faculty and parents contributed to its success. We also wish to remind you to visit [www.candidshots.com](http://www.candidshots.com) to view and purchase photos of the production on line.

*If you haven’t done so already, it’s not too late to Join Us – We Have Magic To Do!* For further information, please contact Kathie Ventura at [kav23@optonline.net](mailto:kav23@optonline.net).