

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

Despite the very cold weather, the January PPO General Meeting was well attended. Thanks to Mrs. Cosgrove, Mr. Davis, Mr. Jaye, Dr. Bath, and Ms. Gabin for very informative presentations relating to AP and IB courses and student summer opportunities. Other January events included our second PPO Buddy Get-Together and a valuable PEI Presentation on taking the SATs and ACTs. These events would not have happened without the efforts of our committee chairs Mary Wang, Hala Saardi, and Carol Blakeslee. On February 5th the Class of 2010 held their "Neon Knights" Freshman Social. I hope those parents who were able to attend had a chance to meet other families and make new friends. Many thanks to the upper-class parents who offered their generous help in setting up the beautiful buffet for this nice event – Carol Blakeslee, Susan Bromberg, Keum Sook Chang, Kwi Ferraboli, Aline Frasca, Sookyung Hahn, Meg McNicholas, Lalitha Ramakrishnan, Amrita Singh, and Wendy Wang.

Immediately after the Winter Recess, we will be holding our second **PPO Work Session on Tuesday, February 27th from 1:00 to 2:30 PM in the Academy Grill**. If you can take time out of your busy schedule, please come join us for refreshments and conversation. Class of 2008 parents and students should make a note on their calendars for the Senior Experience Meeting that is coming up on March 14th.

We continue to update the PPO website at www.academyppo.com to list news, information and links such as Student Summer Opportunities, Cracking the SAT PowerPoint, PPO election information, and of course school closing updates. Please visit the site when you can.

For those of you, especially freshmen and sophomore parents, who are interested in becoming more involved with the PPO next year, please contact a board member. As always, there will be many opportunities to help our BCA community.

All the Best,
Shiaoling Paxson

Calendar Highlights

Feb. 19-23	NO SCHOOL (Presidents' Week)
Feb. 27	PPO Afternoon Work Session 1:00-2:30PM, Academy Grill
March 2 & 3	Winter Musical: <i>Urinetown</i> 7:30PM, Auditorium
March 5	Engineering Week Luncheon 11:30AM-1:30PM, Auditorium Stage
March 6-8	HESPA Testing for Students
March 8	HALF DAY Incoming Class Interviews, 2-5PM
March 13	HALF DAY Incoming Class Interviews, 2-5PM
March 14	Senior Experience Meeting For Juniors, 7PM, Auditorium
March 16	Last day of 2nd Trimester Class 2008 Card Party 7:00PM. Gymnasium Class 2010 St. Patrick's Dance 7:30-10:30PM
March 20	Varsity Award Dinner 6:30PM, Cotillion, Garfield,
March 21	Unsung Heroes Luncheon
March 22	Class 2007 Annual Fashion Show 6:30PM, Venetian, Garfield
March 27	PPO General Meeting 7:30PM, Auditorium

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

Our next issue will be published on March 21, 2007. Please submit all April calendar entries and all articles to Amrita Singh at AmritaS2@aol.com by March 12th. Thank you.

REVISED SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURES

For your convenience, we are enclosing a flyer outlining current procedures for Snow Emergency Days, Delayed Openings, and Mid-Day Closings.

Focus on the Faculty

There are so many special faculty members that I could write about this month but I selected Michelle Pinke (Mahalik) because of her many talents. She is involved in numerous activities and she does all of them so well. Whether it be DECA, FBLA, IB Economics or SAP Technology, Ms. Pinke is a pro. This is Ms. Pinke's 4th year at the Academy and she is well respected by her students as well as their parents. Students expect to work hard in her classes and know that they can count on Ms. Pinke to be fair and understanding.

One of her successes has been her dedication and commitment to DECA, an international association of high school students studying marketing, management and entrepreneurship in business, finance and marketing sales and service. Under her tutelage, our students have an opportunity to showcase their knowledge in business on written assessments, business plan presentations and simulated business situations. Out of the 80 students in the club, 79 are going to the state wide competition in Cherry Hill. Additionally, Michelle conducted a trimester project called 'The Apprentice' in order to expose all students to business topics. We are grateful to have such a dedicated and creative person at the Academy.

— Pat Cosgrove

Got Your T-shirt??

got sleep?

T-shirts have arrived!

Only \$12

~See Flyer to Order~

while supplies last.

Look what's cooking!

The Class of 2008 is organizing a **Bergen Academies International Cookbook**. We'd like to include family recipes from everyone in our wonderfully diverse community.

Would you please help us by sending in several of your favorite recipes? We'd all like to know how to make those fabulous

spare ribs, dumplings, and all the other treats that we feast on at the International dinner. The cookbook will be beautifully illustrated, professionally bound, and available for purchase in the near future. **If you submit your recipes by March 16th, you'll be entered in our grand-prize drawing.** See the enclosed flyer for more details.



BCA

"Capture the Flag"



Card Party

Friday, March 16, 2007

7 PM

The Academies Gymnasium

Snowdate: March 30th

**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 for adults, \$5 for students and staff.

See the enclosed flyer. Reservations preferred;
limited seating at the door.

Info also at www.academyppo.com

Reservations: Lisa Murphy 201-944-2049 Namaxel7@yahoo.com

Raffle donations: Mary Wright 201-848-8982 Malarky@optonline.net, Donna Gormley 201-847-0351
DJGorms@aol.com.

*Bring a favorite recipe for the BCA Cookbook.
Each recipe that you submit will be entered for a chance*

BT All-Sports Booster Club

Join us as we host our

Fourth Bergen Knights Cheerleading Competition on Sunday, March 11th.

If you know any grammar school teams or would like to sell your goods as a vendor during the event, please call Rose 201-664-3371 for details.

Remember Seniors: To be eligible for our scholarship, you must be a Boosters member. For details please call Al Barrios at 201-843-2540 .

Class of 2007:

- **The Fashion Show will be held on March 22, 2007 at the Venetian in Garfield.** Invitations are being sent home to Academy Families. Tickets are \$40.00 for adults and \$30.00 for students. We have some awesome gift baskets including a GPS and a weekend stay at the Marriott in Park Ridge. We are still accepting donations. If you have something at home or would like to send a monetary contribution please contact Barbara Lahullier at barmala@comcast.net. This is our final class fundraiser. Many of your fellow parents have joined together and are working hard to make this a memorable night. Encourage your young adult to model and enjoy an evening out. The Venetian promises an elegant evening with fine dining and our students will provide the entertainment. We hope to see you there!
- Each Academy will have a theme basket for raffle at the Fashion Show. Please remind your child to give \$5.00 to their Academy Representative.
- The February upper lot parking space raffle was won by senior, Neil R. Congratulations Neil! Raffle tickets for the parking spot in March will be on sale Feb. 12th. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 5 tickets for \$3.00.

Class of 2008:

It's a very busy time of the year for our juniors! The students are very involved in the planning of the **Junior Prom** as well as several fundraisers.

The **BCA International Cookbook** is starting to become a reality as we have received lots of recipes. However, we still need more, so if you haven't sent in a recipe, please help us out by getting some to us soon. See the flyer for details.

The **Card Party** is fast approaching-mark your calendar for **Friday, March 16**, and come join the fun. Students, parents, family and friends are welcome to come. Younger siblings had a great time last year! Please fill out your reservation slips as soon as possible as it makes our planning much easier. We continue to seek basket donations, so if you have 1 item or an entire basket, we would very much appreciate having it for our tricky tray raffle. We are still looking for willing volunteers to be coordinators for town-wide baskets.

The 3rd annual class basketball tournament, **Junior Madness**, will begin shortly after our Feb. break. The class will be selling specially made **BCA Blue Ribbon School Car Magnets** in March, so look for them then.

Class of 2009:

On Feb. 2nd, the Class of 2009 sponsored their 2nd annual Valentine's Day dance. It was a huge success due to the outstanding job the Class Council did in organizing and promoting it, and participating in *all* aspects of the dance. A tremendous thanks to all the parents who donated to the raffles and contributed to the snack table! We truly appreciate all of your time, effort, and cooperation. We also extend our sincere thanks to our faculty advisors & teachers who volunteered to chaperone. You all were terrific!!

- Excitement is building as we near the date of the **Sophomore Semi-formal**, scheduled for **April 13th** at the **Crowne Plaza Hotel** in Paramus (near the Paramus Park Mall). Tickets will go on sale **Monday, February 26th** for **\$40 per person**. This special event is open not only to the Class of 2009, but the Freshman class as well.

- We'd like to thank everyone who purchased a bumper sticker and took a chance in the **Beauty and the Beast** raffle! A huge thank you to the **Nitopi Family** for arranging this very generous donation.

- **Bergen Academy static cling window** stickers are still available for \$3.

- Our new shipment of **"got sleep?"** T-shirts has arrived! Priced at \$12 – get them while supplies last!

- Our Staples **recycling program** is in full swing, so keep those ink cartridges and toners coming!

- This spring help the Class of 2009 by donating your old clothes and stuffed animals to our **Clothing Drive**. Save these items to deliver on Saturday, May 12th! Stay tuned for more details! Volunteers needed — e-mail Phyllis Lenkowsky (pklenk@optonline.net).

As we work with our student council and faculty advisors to raise funds to benefit our children's high school senior year experience, we would love to hear from you with questions, suggestions, or interest in volunteering. Carol Blakeslee (bbester8@optonline.net) & Sharon Pierson (SPcreates@aol.com).

Class of 2010:

A wonderful night was had by all who attended the **Freshman Social "Neon Knights" on Monday, February 5th**. Thanks to everyone that helped to make the evening such an enjoyable one, especially Pat Cosgrove, Cherri Rodriguez, Mary Wang, Mandeep Kaur, the PPO, Chef J and the Culinary Academy, all the Parent volunteers, and finally all the parents and family members who gave up their evening and brought a variety of dishes to share with the Class of 2010 "Neon Knights" family. We still have fleece scarves (\$15) and jackets (\$38) for sale. Everyone who has already purchased them has commented on how comfortable and warm they are.

After all the fun the freshman had with their 'Hall' dance in December, they are planning another dance for March: **St. Patrick's Day Dance, Friday, March 16th**, from 7:30–10:30 pm. Students, be sure to look for flyers soon to be out in the halls.

The Freshman Class is in charge of **bake sales** during the Interview days for the Prospective Class of 2011 students (Thurs. 3/8 & Tues. 3/13). Anyone able to help either by donating baked goods and/or working at our tables, please contact Sarah Lucinese or Angella McKenzie.

We are beginning to plan other fun activities (a Run/Walk this May and a T-Shirt design contest). If anyone has any ideas or suggestions or would just like to be part of the brainstorming process, please don't hesitate to contact us. Sarah Lucinese sb0618@excite.com & Angella McKenzie gatchair@optonline.net

French II Class meets Grenoble

A subtle city, only a few miles west from Italy, cowers at the foot of deliciously glazed Chartreuse, Vercors, and Belledonne ranges, overshadowed by the monumental snow-frosted Alps. There, city life pounds with vigorous identity, but remains mindful of its own concealed beauty. This is Grenoble--a snowy-white pearl of France.

So what exactly links Grenoble to our own Bergen Academy campus? Students in Mme Boutcher's French II class have established a correspondence with Lycée Stendhal from this town. Through epals.com, they have been able to email each other since the beginning of the year.

They are able to exercise their French writing ability by toning grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and structure outside a classroom environment. This has encouraged an understanding of the material and provided an experience where the participants clearly see how the knowledge gathered in class can be implemented.

The activity also enables cultural exchange, as BCA teens are subjected to life, traditions, and interests of the region. This in turn develops more globally aware and well-rounded individuals, who are likely to be respectful and understanding of differing cultures and customs, while realizing their own place amongst a diverse world.

Most importantly however, the correspondence has managed to arouse interest in the participants. The passion is evident as pupils rummage through French dictionaries in search of the right words, discuss recent emails from their Grenoble friends, and hungrily gape at the video sent to them from France. As a matter of fact, to continue this enriching project, the BCA French II class will film a similar video and send it to Grenoble. It will feature the students' own descriptions of their hobbies and defining qualities, and prompt the French class to guess each person's name.

Merci beaucoup Mme Boutcher for teaching that

We Are Linked Each to the Other

What does it mean to be connected? Linked? What does it mean to see your reflection in the eyes of another or, through the eyes of another? Freshman Visual Art Majors, through an exploration of visual expressions of notable blacks and in celebration of Black History Month, have concluded that "each link is equal to the strength of the chain" and that we are all, somehow, connected. To give life to this expression, visual and written, these students created a large scale collaborative artwork that demonstrates their well developed drawing foundation skills in charcoal renderings of notable blacks in history, government, athletics, and entertainment. The 4' x 8' piece consisting of eighteen 10" x 10" charcoal portraits, along with significant quotations and philosophies, is anchored by a three dimensional heavy black chain and the leading quo-

tation "each link is equal to the strength of the chain". This remarkable work expresses a powerful visual message and is currently being exhibited (for the month of February) at the Bergen County Courthouse. During the month of March, which celebrates Youth Art Month, it will hang in our Gallery in Studio 139 along with other recent works. Please take a moment to view it.

I am proud to announce news of our capturing four of twelve possible top awards (Northeast Division) in the National Coca Cola "Art of Harmony" design contest. These are cross academy students as well as visual majors. Students will be honored and awards will be announced at a reception at the Newark Museum in late April.

— JoAnn Onnembo

Annual Bergen County Academy Fashion Show The Venetian in Garfield, NJ Thursday, March 22, 2007

Basket Preview and Hors d'oeuvres
beginning at 6:30

Followed by a Four Course Dinner

Grand Prizes
The Nintendo Wii System
GPS

~Extra Graduation Tickets~
~Over 100 Fabulous Gift Baskets~

Invitations & tickets are being mailed to your home.

Project Graduation - Class of 2008

Plans for Project Graduation 2008 are underway! If you haven't already done so, please send your \$100 deposit with your child's name, academy, and phone number to:
Susan Bromberg,

715 Beechcrest Drive, River Vale, NJ 07675.

Checks should be made payable to "Project Graduation 2008." Note: you may pay the full \$200 at this time, or you may send only your \$100 deposit now with the remainder due in your child's senior year.

For further information or inquiries please contact:

Susan Bromberg at susan@tnovausa.com,
(201)573-1459 or Nancy Lagomarsino at
NancyLago@aol.com, (201)261-7242.

Math Team Boosters

On February 6th, BCA students participated in the first round of the American Mathematics Competition, achieving many high scores. Second round opportunity will be on February 21st.

The Mandelbrot Competition continues, with our mathletes maintaining the lead in the Eastern Region Team division. A number of our math team members have distinguished themselves in the individual standings as well. Keep up the great work!

We are anxiously awaiting the results of the Mu Alpha Theta 4 by 4.

Much gratitude to the record number of parents who have volunteered to chaperone the math team trip to Cambridge for the Harvard-MIT Math Competition.

Several big Groundhog's Day weekend celebrations were held in honor of our special coach's special birthday. Many happy returns to Mr. Holbrook!!!

— Sharon Drucker

Titanium Knights Robotics

Over 15 robots and 30 students from the Academies are registered to compete at the North East Robotic Conflict's "Motorama" event on the weekend of February 18th in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. As these students are scrambling to get their robotic creations together and tweaked, plans also continue for the National BotsIQ event this April. The Titanium Knights currently hope to compete with 3 large class and 3 mini class robots and to defend

and maintain our championship title. The BotsIQ event is scheduled for April 12-15 in Miami, Florida.

For more information about our group, or to find out how you can help out, please browse to: <http://www.bergen.org/BattleBots>, call 201-343-6000 x2211 or email: jdefalco@bergen.org. You can also visit our new booster's site at: <http://www.academypopo.com/Engineer>

— Joe DeFalco

SkillsUSA

Welcome to the SkillsUSA chapter of Bergen County Academies! SkillsUSA is a national student leadership organization that focuses on community service, dedication to learning, and growth of the individual. Every year, the BCA team completes three community service projects involving the school, local chapter, surrounding towns and cities, and ideally, the entire nation. In past years, BCA's chapter has collaborated with Tomorrows Children's Fund, sent baskets of necessities to the troops in Iraq, and helped increase awareness of higher level education. Our American Spirit Team has been recognized nationally for their achievement and hopes to showcase the chapter's projects at this year's competition.

This year, the chapter hopes to aid the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Although the South is on its way to recovery, simple necessities, such as pencils and paper, are needed to open the schools. As one school reaching out to another, the SkillsUSA chapter wants to have a School Supply Fundraiser. SkillsUSA encourages all students and parents to help out with this community effort. We will be accepting any type of school supplies throughout the months of February and March. Students can submit the supplies to their Igs teacher, or drop them into designated boxes in front of the gym, the Culinary Grill, the Main office, downstairs cafeteria, and the Senior Breezeway. Thank you for contributing!

Last week, three SkillsUSA teams traveled to Ocean County to compete in the Tech Prep Showcase. Extensive research, cooperation, problem solving and presentation

skills, (some of the fundamental principles of SkillsUSA) were essential in allowing these teams to win their competitions. According to SkillsUSA advisor, Chef Mary Beth Brace, "The student's presentations were extraordinary and we are very proud of all of them! The students showed amazing poise, determination and camaraderie." It is evident that these students possessed the qualities that the SkillsUSA judges were looking for. The dedication of the BCA staff, especially the technology department, and the guidance of advisors Brace, Branda, and Lang, facilitated the difficult task of outdoing eighty other motivated competitors from similar technical and vocational programs.

The education cluster and the hospitality cluster made BCA proud by achieving 6 state gold medals and 3 bronze medals. By qualifying themselves for the national competition in Kansas City, Missouri, both teams have moved themselves that much closer to the epitome of SkillsUSA medals: the national gold medal. In addition, the business cluster attained the bronze medal.

It is almost impossible to comprehend just how arduous it is to conform to SkillsUSA's strict national criteria. Explains SkillsUSA advisor Chef John Branda, "Competitors really have to step their game up, for it is increasingly hard to fit into SkillsUSA's national standards. It is truly a major hurdle to hit the SkillsUSA's specified milestone. Interestingly, you could triumph over all of your opponents at the state contest and still not qualify for nationals."

The SkillsUSA Tech Prep state champions look forward to the increased difficulty at the national level.

Cultural Connections...

Theatre Arts News — February 2007

The Theatre Department is 'heating up' these frigid days with lots of production activity!



An immediate hit when it originated in 1999 at the New York Fringe Festival, nominated for 10 Tony awards when it moved to Broadway, *Urinetown* is the tale of greed, corruption, love and revolution in a time when water is worth its weight in gold. In a familiar city, plagued by a 20 year drought, a greedy corporate titan has seized control of the water supply and with the help of corrupt politicians, instituted a government-enforced ban on private toilets. His evil company profits by charging admission for "the privilege to pee," and a revolt ensues. This humorous satire inspired by the work of Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill is perfect for all ages.

Over 150 students from all grades and all academies are involved in this large collaborative effort from creating characters to perfecting the score, to polishing choreography, to building and painting the sets, to managing the cast and crew, to finding the props, to organizing costumes, to creating the logo to, to running the lights and sound to taking your ticket reservations for **Friday and Saturday March 2nd and 3rd at 7:30 pm.** You will find, enclosed in this mailing, a *Urinetown* ticket order form. Choose your date, fill out the form and send it along with your check made out to BCA Student Activities to Dr. Rebecca Strum at BCA. **All seating is**

reserved so act now for the best seats in the house!

During trimester three there will be two performance opportunities for all students. Auditions for both will take place this trimester. Our Spring Play will be *Shakespeare Fights Broadway Nights*, a totally new experience for academy students.

Students will work with director Victoria Pero and certified stage combat trainer Barbara Seaford to produce an evening of scenes from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The production will be staged arena style (an Academy first) with audience seated on stage on four sides of the performers. The work on the spring play will be enhanced for students involved with four trips into Manhattan to the professional theatre. Auditions were held on February 7 & 8. *Romeo and Juliet* will be performed on **June 2 and 3.**

The fourteen AVPA: Theatre seniors will direct 10 One Act Plays to be presented on **May 18, 19 and 20** in the **Theatre Arts Studio.** The One-Act Play Festival provides performance opportunities for many students, a chance for our seniors to take on an artistic leadership role, and an exciting evening of theatre for our audience. Seniors are finalizing their play choices as we go to press and will hold their auditions on March 9 and 12.

— Rebecca Strum
Performing Arts Coordinator

You are in good company ...

... when you support The Arts at Bergen Academies!

The Performing Arts Parents Association looks forward to the upcoming production of *Urinetown* on Friday and Saturday, March 2-3, at 7:30 p.m.

- * Invite your family and friends to join you for two pun-filled evenings of award-winning musical theater when students across all Academies present *Urinetown – The Musical*. Reserved seating is available through the Ticket Hot Line at (201) 343-6000, Extension 2300. \$12 for adults, \$10 for students & seniors.
- * Quench your thirst at PAPA's refreshment tables each evening where we will be selling water, of course, in addition to mouth-watering desserts, *Kisses for the Cast and Crew*, and fresh floral bouquets. Custom arrangements may be pre-ordered directly from Gloria's Flowers at 1-800-536-2056.
- * *Follow your heart* and contribute to a worthy cause! In the lobby, we will be collecting tax deductible donations to Waterkeeper Alliance, a nonprofit environmental advocacy organization dedicated to clean, healthy waterways and strong communities.
- * Browse through our new super Playbill and be sure to patronize our generous sponsors. Please keep Playbill advertising opportunities in mind when you visit your local restaurants, and by next year at this time, we will be able to develop a comprehensive Bergen County Dining Directory.

*Remember, all of PAPA's profits support BCA's performing arts programs.
For further information, contact Kathie Ventura at kav23@optonline.net.*