

CONNECTIONS

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

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President's Message

Every year the PPO provides financial support to various student clubs and programs to help enrich the Academy community. This month the PPO Board carefully reviewed all 17 applications received, and has allocated Club Activities funding with the goal of benefiting the greatest number of students this year, and in the years to come. Thanks to our membership support, the Board was able to offer a total of \$5,180 for this purpose.

As you may know, the PPO is always trying to include more articles from faculty members in our newsletter. This March issue includes information about the new Biotechnology Laboratory, Chemistry Summer Reading, the Physics Department, Senior Experience, Youth Art Month, Engineering, Music and Performing Arts. Many thanks to all the faculty members who took the time to write and share their thoughts with us.

Also this month, we had our second PPO Work Session and second Advisory Committee Meeting. One of the issues that stood out was a request from parents for additional information about Wednesday Clubs and Student Activities. In response, the school is preparing a handout to be given to parents at the PPO Fishbowl Meeting on March 27.

With the coming of spring, it is time to start planning for the next school year. Mary Ann Hoogerheyde, Hala Saardi, and Amrita Singh have graciously agreed to serve as the Nominating Committee to solicit and select a slate of parents interested and qualified to serve on the 2007-2008 PPO Board. If you would like to be considered, or if you want to suggest someone, please contact any Nominating Committee member. PPO Board Elections will take place at the General Meeting on May 21, 2007.

By the way, it's never too late to reach out and volunteer some time to help support any of the upcoming PPO Activities or Class Events. Please see the Family Directory for a listing of all Committee Chairs and Class Parents. I thank you in advance for all your help.

All the Best,

Shiaoling Paxson

Calendar Highlights

March 27	PPO General Meeting and Fishbowl Discussion 7:30PM, Auditorium
April 6	NO SCHOOL
April 11	Unsung Heroes Luncheon 12:00 Noon, Academy Grill
April 12	National Honor Society Induction 7:30PM, Auditorium
April 13	Sophomore Semiformal Dance
April 17	PPO General Meeting 7:30PM, Auditorium
April 23-27	NO SCHOOL (Spring Recess)
May 3	BCA College Fair 6-8PM, Gymnasium

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

Our next issue will be published on April 18, 2007. Please submit all May calendar entries and all articles to Amrita Singh at AmritaS2@aol.com by April 9th. Thank you.

PPO Executive Board Candidates Wanted

The PPO Nominating Committee is seeking candidates to fill executive board positions for the 2007-2008 school year:

- **President** – oversees organization as a whole.
- **First Vice President** – oversees all standing committees and fills in for President, if necessary.
- **Second Vice President** – oversees special committees (e.g. picnic, open house, international dinner).
- **Corresponding Secretary** – liaison between PPO board and community.
- **Recording Secretary** – takes minutes at Executive Board meetings and PPO meetings.
- **Treasurer** – handles finances for the organization.

If you are interested in serving, or would like more information, please contact any of the members of the Nominating Committee. (Please note: serving on the board requires day-time availability.)

Nominating Committee:

Mary Ann Hoogerheyde	rmcjj1@optonline.net
Hala Saardi	Hsaardi@yahoo.com
Amrita Singh	AmritaS2@aol.com

Focus on the Faculty

In keeping with Academy tradition of being a model for innovation and reform in the 21st century, I am proud to announce the opening of our new state of the art Biotechnology Laboratory that will afford our students the opportunity to engage in hands-on research in the emerging field of stem cell research. Much of the credit for this unique student experience goes to Dr. Robert Pergolizzi, Mrs. Donna Leonardi and Mrs. Rachel Stott whose dedication and commitment to our students is greatly appreciated. Dr. Pergolizzi, our newest Biology instructor and former faculty member of The Weill Cornell Medical College, Department of Genetic Medicine is very excited for Academy students to be moving into this area of scientific inquiry. His expertise in this field is a welcome addition to the Biology Department. Mrs. Leonardi, who also worked at Weill Cornell Medical Center as a cytogeneticist and cell culturist, works during the summer for the Department of Homeland Security – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services doing DNA analysis at Clinical Testing and Research, Inc. Mrs. Stott serves as a mentor to students performing research in the lab and prepares students in the biotechnology program to enter the research program. Next week Mrs. Stott will be hosting four Japanese students and their teachers as they complete a joint project investigating the evolutionary history of giant salamanders.

These three teachers combine to provide Academy students with opportunities well beyond those that the typical high school offers. What will the future bring?

— Pat Cosgrove



The Jazz Band will be performing at Trumpets Jazz Club & Restaurant on Monday evening, April 16! All are invited and reservations are highly encouraged. A \$10 cover charge applies. The musicians will be performing from 7:00-8:30. A full dinner/dessert menu is available. You can make reservations by calling the club: 973-744-2600.

Please join us on May 1 (7:00-8:30) at the Puffin Cultural Forum in Teaneck. The World Music Ensemble will be presenting a performance and reception. Students will present music from all continents and food served at the reception will be from those countries. A \$10 donation applies. Both of these events are fundraisers for the BCA music department.

Summer Reading in Chemistry?!

Tradition dictates that students tackle the great texts of Shakespeare, Twain or Sophocles while hanging out at the beach, but before the 2003-2004 school year, and in true Bergen County Academies fashion, I took a chance on a new idea: science summer reading. Fortunately, the students took to it better than I could have dreamed and summer reading is now a staple in the Advanced Chemistry curriculum for AAST and AEDT. In fact, due to popular demand, a second work of science non-fiction was added to the curriculum last year. It is rewarding to see students engage these readings and understand that science is an essential way of knowing our modern world – that scientific dialogue goes well beyond pH calculations, Punnett squares and force diagrams.

It turns out that asking young science students to read beyond their textbooks may not be such a radical idea. While advocating for the inclusion of popular science works in high school science curricula, physicist Brian Greene, in his introduction to *The Best American Science and Nature Writing 2006*, opined, “Good science writing can humanize the abstractions of scientific research by establishing visceral, meaningful connections to questions and issues we care about and by humanizing the scientific process itself.” Given our school’s goal of teaching the whole child, Greene’s perspective that science writing builds a bridge between the sciences and the humanities resonates.

The titles incorporated into the Advanced Chemistry curriculum include *Voodoo Science* by physicist Robert Park, *The Fly in the Ointment* by chemist Joe Schwarz and *The Demon-Haunted World* by the late astronomer Carl Sagan. These well-written, entertaining works emphasize the necessity of objective thinking within the sciences (and beyond) while reminding readers that science is a human activity with its share of flawed figures and triumphant heroes. The numerous emails I receive from our clever students debunking the latest medical or thermodynamic quackery are a testament to the genuine connections they are making with these texts.

As always, your input is vital. If you have ideas for other popular science books to include or if you want to tell me how much (or little) your child enjoyed the assignment, please contact me.

— Dr. Todd Crane, todcra@bergen.org,
201-343-6000 ext. 2380

Class of 2007:

- **Thank you** to all the parents who made the Fashion Show a success. Special thanks to Barbara Lahullier, Solicitation Chairperson, Janet Hascup and Robin Bernarducci, Fashion Chairpersons and the Committee: Lisa Abrams, Gloria Andrade, Diane Barsa, Fran Grifka, Cathy Grillo, Antica Dobric Lee, Hala Saardi and Debbie Torre.
- The Senior Class is currently organizing a Senior Citizens Pasta Dinner for Thursday, May 10th, a half-day. Senior Citizens from local senior centers, as well as parents of faculty members, will be invited. Students interested in volunteering for this community service project, please contact Christian Hoogerheyde: chrhoo@bergen.org
- Senior Prom: Wednesday June 6, 2007 at the Rockleigh Country Club
- The Class of 2007 is in the midst of planning the Senior Showcase, to be held on June 14th, during senior week. Students looking to perform can contact Jennie Choi: euncho@bergen.org
- Graduation: Wednesday June 20, 2007 at BCA in the auditorium

Class of 2008:

- **Card Party Fundraiser:** Who would have imagined that on a 60 degree day we would be making the decision to use the snow date for the Card Party?! We hope that everyone can still attend on Friday, March 30th. We would like to thank everyone for the generous donations and offers to volunteer. We have over 60 fabulous raffle baskets that include a Play Station Portable, digital camera, tickets for Lincoln Center, restaurant and store gift certificates and other beautiful baskets. We will continue to accept reservations as well as walk-ins. Hope to see you there!
- **Yearbook Photos:** Senior Portraits for juniors will be taken March 26-30.
- **Junior Prom:** May 18. Tickets will be on sale soon.

Class of 2009:

- March has certainly come in like a lion! As I write this, it is twelve degrees outside. As we move from winter to spring, our class has several very special events coming up! Sophomore Semiformal, Friday, April 13th, Crowne Plaza Hotel in Paramus (near the Paramus Park Mall), \$40 per student. Our Class Council, Faculty advisors, and talented parents have been planning and preparing for the Sophomore Semiformal. It's sure to be a fabulous event!! Tickets purchased through a Class Council member will reserve your students their places. Tickets will begin to be sold the week of March 19th. Be sure to encourage your student to get his/her ticket as soon as they go on sale, as there are places for 250 people and both sophomores and freshmen are invited. Sophomore Parent Social, Friday, May 4th – A Class of 2009 Cabaret, \$15 for adults, \$7 for students, no more than

\$35 for families (performers are free). Last year we had a wonderful time with our “Freshmen Flight.” We continue the journey with this sophomore parent and student social, which includes a “cabaret” of performances by our extremely talented children and an opportunity to win an array of Raffle Baskets.

- Clothing Drive, May 12th – Scheduled at the same time as our school picnic for your convenience, this Class of 2009 fundraiser will take your old clothes and stuffed animals, so don't throw anything away! Please e-mail Phyllis Lenkowsky at pklenk@optonline.net, with any questions. We will be holding a planning meeting with interested parents regarding these upcoming events and others on March 20th. We are always interested in your input, help, and support. **Look forward to seeing you at our Sophomore Social on May 4th!** Sharon Pierson and Carol Blakeslee (SPcreates@aol.com and BBester8@optonline.net)

Class of 2010:

- Our enthusiastic class of 2010 has done it again. On March 9th the students hosted their second party of the school year. Thanks to the student council for the wonderful job they did. Thanks to all the parents who chaperoned and donated water and sodas. We also extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to our class advisors and teachers who volunteered to chaperone. **THANK YOU!!**
- Our Bake Sales were successful. Thank you to all the parents who donated baked goods and volunteered to work the Bake sales. Also a special thanks to the students that helped. You marketed and sold “your” products well.
- Spring is just around the corner and our **BCA Fleece Jackets** are great for this time of year. You can place your order by contacting Sarah Lucinese at sb0618@excite.com or Angella McKenzie at gatchair@optonline.net. Our goal is to raise funds so that our children will have an amazing senior year experience. So if you have any questions, suggestions or ideas we would love to hear from you. Sarah Lucinese at sb0618@excite.com or Angella McKenzie at gatchair@optonline.net.

WE NEED YOU!

The Class of 2007 needs chaperones for this year's **PROJECT GRADUATION**

Date: June 20, 2007
Time: 9:30 PM-6:00 AM
Place: It's a big secret!

Please help supervise one of the year's most exciting events.

All parents are welcome to respond. Parents of freshmen, sophomores and juniors may find it helpful to attend so that they can see what the future holds for their children.

If you are interested in chaperoning Project Graduation 2007, please call Miriam Levin at 201-797-3073.

The Academy Physics Department

The physics department at the academy is made up of 7 individuals from different backgrounds and educations. The physics department staff has experience teaching at the high school and college levels as well as research and industry experience. The common bond is a love of physics and a love of teaching.

All students at the academy will take some physics. Depending on the academy, students have core physics classes for 1, 2 or 3 years. In addition to core classes the physics department offers several electives including: Astronomy, AP Physics B, AP Physics C and Physics Research. Beyond the classes there are projects and

clubs that students can get involved with to further their interest in physics: The Manhattan Project, The Bridge Building project and others. The physics club is available for students who want to study additional topics for competitions or prepare for SAT IIs.

The academy has a tradition of excellence in physics. Academy students have successfully competed in many competitions including: The Siemens Competition, The Intel Science and Technology Fair, NJ Science League and others. In each of the last 3 years academy physics students have been selected as members of the US International Physics Team.

Senior Experience and the Class of 2008

The Junior Parent Senior Experience Meeting was held on March 14, 2007. The Senior Experience Coordinator, Heather Lawler, spoke briefly and gave an overview of the Senior Experience program to the parents and students in attendance. Ronda Marshall, the Senior Experience Secretary, distributed documents including copies of the Structured Learning Experience Agreement and Student Learning Plan, a timeline, a list of Senior Experience assignments, and a list of current internships. If you were not able to attend, these documents will be mailed to you.

Following the presentation, there was a panel discussion hosted by mentors and current Senior Experience students from the class of 2007. We extend our sincere appreciation to the mentors: Phil Ball - Merrill Lynch, Bill DiMinno - Innovative Performance Group, Sam Gutmann - Intronis, Jeff Heffner - The Clinton Inn, and Joan McGowan - Valley Hospital. In addition, we greatly appreciate the contributions of the seniors. Our gratitude also goes to the PPO who graciously supported the meeting with coffee and cookies. Thank you all for your time and effort.

Juniors should now begin researching internships for

the 2007-2008 school year. Mentors accept students on a case-by-case basis. The fit between student and opportunity is of the utmost importance; therefore, it is necessary for students to apply and interview for desired internships. Students may pursue current internships listed at <http://www.bergen.org/academy/seniorexp/> or students may seek other internship opportunities through networking or traditional job search methods. All internships must be approved by the Senior Experience Coordinator. If you are interested in mentoring a student, please contact the Senior Experience staff at 201-343-6000 ext. 2022 / 2023.

The Senior Exhibitions will be held on June 6, 2007. This event is an opportunity for juniors to meet mentors and learn the details of current internships. After the Senior Exhibitions, juniors should make final decisions on the type of internship they wish to pursue and stay in contact with the Senior Experience staff throughout the summer until they have secured a Senior Experience internship for the 2007-2008 school year. We look forward to another exciting year and hope you all have a successful Senior Experience!

— Heather Lawler, Senior Experience Coordinator

Fine/Visual Arts News

Visual Frosh are being honored at the Bergen County Courthouse on March 16th for their artistic contribution to Black History Month (highlighted in last month's newsletter). The work will return to our campus the following week (beginning March 22nd) and hang in Gallery #139 along with other student works celebrating **Youth Art Month**. Please stop in, post comments and/or congratulations and enjoy the fruits of their labor. I am currently collecting submissions for consideration of up-

coming art competitions/exhibits including the **Rothman Congressional** (local and national, 2D work only) and **Teen Arts** (Bergen County). Students from all academies are encouraged to participate and may offer two or three dimensional works. Deadlines are 4:00 p.m. of day noted and firm: **Congressional — Wed., March 28; Teen Arts — Mon., April 30**. Students will be notified if their work has been selected. Students are encouraged to e-mail me (joann@bergen.org) for more details and/or watch for postings outside of Studio #139.

— joann onnembo, Fine/Visual Arts

Math Team Boosters

As always, a great time was had by all -- students, faculty, parents, alumni... — in Cambridge for the annual Harvard - MIT Math Competition. Our team returned with trophies, frisbees, and lots of terrific memories.

BCA Math Team has achieved overall first place on the 2007 Four by Four Competition. Additionally, we have taken many of the top spots in the various divisions. Bravo to all involved!

We cheered on our three teams as they worked for 14 hours [!] on the Moody's Mega Math Challenge. Moody's is an intense applied math competition. We anxiously await results.

Our mathletes have been busily preparing for the AIME. Some have taken the exam on March 13th, with the rest of the team participating on March 28th.

... And, sometime soon, there will be an ARML Power Round. Whew, what a busy season!!!

— Sharon Drucker

Attention Junior Parents:

Academy College Fair

to be held in the Academy Gymnasium

May 3, 2007, 6:00 - 8:00PM

For college planning information, please visit:
<http://www.collegeboard.com/parents/>

PPO Picnic is Around the Corner... Volunteers are Needed

We're starting to plan for this year's PPO Picnic, scheduled for Saturday May 12, 2007 from 12PM to 4PM, rain or shine. Last year's picnic was a huge success, attended by more than 800 current and incoming students and their families, faculty, Academy Administration and Central Administration. A great time was had by all – perfect weather, good food, games and a great chance to catch up with old friends and make new friends. We anticipate this year's picnic to be even better, as we all come together to welcome next year's Freshman Class – the Class of 2011!

Volunteers are needed on the day of the picnic to help with phone calls, setup, registration, food preparation, cooking, serving and clean-up. This is only a 2 hour time commitment and is a great way to get involved with other parents. If you can't help that day, but would still like to help out, please let us know. Please email any of the co-chairs, including your name, phone number, email address, and the job/time slot you're interested in. We can be reached at: Janet Nemeč: jnemeč2@optonline.net or 201-670-1871, Nancy Lagomarsino: NancyLago@aol.com or 201-261-7242, or Susan Bromberg: susan@tnovausa.com or 201-573-1459. As always, thank you so much for your help and support!

Titanium Knights Robotics

Despite the cold and the icy driving conditions, many teams from our school attended the "Motorama" event on the weekend of February 18th in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Top win for our school was 4th place. Students also participated in the Engineering Week Luncheon Robot Rumble on March 5th to the delight of our honored engineer guests.

Time is running out for our robotic creations entered in the National BotsIQ event this April. The Titanium Knights BotsIQ teams currently hope to prepare 3 large class and 3 mini class robots and to defend and maintain our championship title, but our shipping date is approaching fast. Students are rising to the challenge and have pledged to work every day after school as needed to meet these goals. 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: <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

ACAHA Senior Triumphs At Chocolate Challenge

Although a certain culinary arts senior humbly claims baking is not his forte, his proficiency manifested itself into a confectionary masterpiece, garnering him first place and a \$3,500 scholarship at the SkillsUSA and Culinary Institute of America's Chocolate Challenge.

A jury of professional chefs at the Garden State Exhibition Center awarded the contest's most prestigious prize to our student's sumptuous showpiece.

The creation entitled, "Midnight in Milano: An Amaretto Puzzle Cake" was an intricate labyrinth woven through silky, contrasting chiffon cake, laced in amaretto syrup. Pastry instructor Chef Brace explained, "The cannoli filling and buttercream icing, constructed like a puzzle piece with layers converging in different directions, gave [the cake] a distinct look." The velvety, sophisticated cake, crowned with delicately formed caramelized sugar fans and corkscrews, was a perfect infusion of traditional Italian ingredients, such as ricotta cheese and almonds, with contemporary culinary inspirations.

Brace praised the rising gastronomic star, "He is a multi-talented young chef with a promising future ahead of him."

Cultural Connections...

Theatre Arts News — March 2007



Spring in the BCA Theatre department has become a time of savoring, for the last few moments, the thrills of a fulfilling large-scale musical theatre production while moving on to new, more intimate, innovative pieces. It is difficult to let go of the amazing ensemble feeling created by the cast and crew of *Urinetown*, *The Musical* from the fully developed character created, through song, dance and acting, by each of the 60 actors on stage to the versatile musicians who mastered a pastiche of musical styles to the exceptional audio developed by our sound team to the colorful and witty sets and costumes to the 'knock-your-socks-off lighting', to the stage managers and production team who insured an utterly smooth running show, to the student house managers who developed a system of reserved ticketing and managed to seat close to 2,000 people to the warmth and joy generated by those 2,000 folks in the audience. *Urinetown* -- we shall miss you! The cast will perform a few numbers from the show one last time at the end of March for students visiting from Kokutaiji High School in Hiroshima Japan.

Last week the AVPA: Theatre seniors completed casting for their one-act play festival to be held in May.

Sixty four students will be working with our 14 student directors. Last week the cast of our innovative all-female cast of *Romeo and Juliet*, our spring Main-Stage production to be performed arena-style in June, had their publicity photo taken, and so we move on to these new projects.

In addition to these spring production opportunities students will learn about Commedia Del'Arte and fantasy stage makeup in Victoria Pero's Wednesday project, open to all academies. Theatre students will work in masks they have created, study 'the Scottish play' and plays by Bertolt Brecht, Arthur Miller, August Wilson, Ntozake Shange, Sam Sheppard, Paula Vogel, David Mamet, Suzanne Lori Parks. They will learn more about themselves in their monologue work and learn more about each other in their scene work, they will submit their plays for adjudication and critique, learn new combinations in jazz and tap, take master classes from visiting guest-artists and see professional productions in New York.

We all look forward to a rich and rewarding spring trimester.

— Rebecca Strum
Performing Arts Coordinator

The Art of Excellence ... at Bergen Academies!

We hope you took advantage of the opportunity to see the resoundingly successful performances of *Urinetown* on March 2nd and 3rd. The nearly SRO audience left BCA's theatre amazed by the professional caliber of the production. Well, we agree! We are also sure you were equally impressed by the masterful choral and instrumental concerts in December and February. With expert guidance, hundreds of students across all Academies enthusiastically participate in the performing arts at BCA, and PAPA is delighted to do whatever we can to support their work. We genuinely thank *everyone* involved for enriching our lives with these spectacular performances as well as *everyone* who contributes to PAPA's concerted efforts.

- * *Can't get enough of Urinetown?* Place your order for a CD of approximately 75 still photos of individual and group scenes from the show. Please send your \$20 check to Kathie Ventura, 18 Summit Ave, Montvale, NJ 07645-1222.
- * *Wondering where to eat tonight?* Please patronize our generous advertisers, and be sure to tell them you discovered them in the Academy Playbill. We not only count on their sustaining sponsorship, but also hope to expand this base with a comprehensive directory next year. If you wish to be included or know of any potential advertisers, please reserve ad space now.
- * *Looking forward to more Academy entertainment?* Mark your calendars for Improv Night (March 23), the Spring Instrumental Concert (May 17), Student-Directed One-Act Play Festival (May 18-20), Spring Choral Concert (May 22), and scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* in the round with stage combat techniques in *Shakespeare Fights - Broadway Nights* (June 2-3).

PAPA's profits benefit all of the performing arts programs at the Academy.
We appreciate your support! For further information, contact Kathie Ventura kav23@optonline.net.