

# 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

Even though we are just five weeks into the new school year, it's apparent that everything is already in full swing. It was recently announced that our school has received a **2006 National Blue Ribbon Schools Award**. Congratulations to Pat Cosgrove, all the faculty, administrators, staff and students for earning this prestigious academic performance award. In addition to being Blue Ribbon Day in honor of the award, September 28<sup>th</sup> was groundbreaking day for the new north academic wing. The PPO's first General Meeting was also held on the 28<sup>th</sup>. I want to thank Mr. Aloia, Mr. Panicucci, and Mrs. Cosgrove for making presentations on the State of the Academies and about future directions that Academy programs will be taking. For those who were not able to attend the meeting, minutes are available on-line at the PPO's website [www.academyppo.com](http://www.academyppo.com).

The students' work has also picked up speed, both in the classroom with ongoing quizzes, tests, essays, group projects and PowerPoint presentations, and outside the classroom with club activities, Wednesday projects, special events and competitions. As a reminder, **Back-to-School Night will take place on Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 8:40 PM**. As you know, this is a good opportunity to meet your child's teachers, learn more about the focus of the curriculum, and get preliminary feedback on your child's classroom performance.

The PPO distributed the **2006-2007 Family Directory** to all members on October 13th. Of special note this year is the addition of a page listing e-mail addresses for all the teachers. We hope you find this helpful.

For those of you who are coming, I know you will enjoy this year's **International Dinner** on Saturday, October 21. The selection of food is always amazing, and you are sure to meet new friends. In addition there will be musical entertainment offered by our talented students including a string quartet and jazz trio.

As always, many, many thanks to all the dedicated PPO volunteers for their hard work making all this happen.

All the best,  
Shiaoling Paxson

## Calendar Highlights

- October 21 **International Dinner**, 6:30PM, Gymnasium
- October 25 **HALF DAY**
- October 25 **Back-to-School Night**, 5:00-8:40PM
- October 26 **Brother/Sister Admission Meeting**, 7:00PM, Cafeteria
- October 30 **PPO Afternoon Work Session**, 1:00-2:30PM, BCA Boardroom
- Nov. 3 & 4 **The Grapes of Wrath** 7:30PM, Auditorium
- Nov. 5 **Open House**, 11AM & 2PM
- Nov. 6 **Fall Jr. Varsity/Freshmen Awards**, 7:00PM, Upstairs Cafeteria
- Nov. 9-10 **NO SCHOOL**, NJEA Convention
- Nov. 14 **PPO General Meeting** 7:00 PM, Auditorium
- Nov. 16 **HALF DAY**
- Nov. 17 **Autumn Concert** 7:30PM, Auditorium
- Nov. 19 **Open House**, 11AM & 2PM
- Nov. 22 **HALF DAY**
- Nov. 23-24 **NO SCHOOL**, Thanksgiving

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

Our next issue will be published on Nov. 15, 2006. Please submit all December & January calendar entries to Amrita Singh at [AmritaS2@aol.com](mailto:AmritaS2@aol.com) & all articles to Marianne Bente at [CM2D@optonline.net](mailto:CM2D@optonline.net) by Nov. 6th. Thank you.

### Volunteers Needed for Academies 2006 Open Houses

Volunteers are needed on Sunday Nov. 5, Nov. 19 & Dec. 3. Please consider helping out from either 10:30 AM to 12 noon or from 1:30 PM to 3 PM on any of the Sundays listed above. You will be signing in prospective students and their families. This is a great way to meet other parents and find out what's happening at the Academies. And, it's only a 1½ hour time commitment! Please call Donna Walsh at 201- 944-4860 or email Susan Bromberg at [susan@tnovausa.com](mailto:susan@tnovausa.com), indicating the day(s) and time(s) you are available to help. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

## Focus on the Faculty

From BattleBots to Admissions, and from the classroom to the Internet Science and Technology Fair, Michael Liva has done it all and then some. An Academy physics teacher since 1999, Mr. Liva's first love is teaching and how to collaboratively work with his peers.

Mr. Liva is presently involved in bringing the lesson-study strategy to our Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> grade math/science projects. This Japanese lesson model enables teachers to work collaboratively in groups to identify goals for student instruction and to integrate those goals in developing standards based classroom lessons. Students are challenged to become active learners by integrating problem solving and critical thinking skills into their math/science project. Mr. Liva has spearheaded this initiative by collaborating with peers to showcase their first lesson study on estimation by the end of October. One critical component of this model is to have teachers observe one another to gather evidence on what works best for student learners.

I applaud Mr. Liva for taking a leadership role in developing this teaching strategy at the Academy.

— Pat Cosgrove

## Thank you...

I would like to thank the following parents for working on the Hospitality Committee, supplying snacks, setting up and cleaning up for the first PPO meeting of the school year: Andrea Zettler, Deborah Carroll, Laureen Karanfilian, Lissa Mayer, Esther Bernstein, Donna Barone, Karen Misler, Mary Wang, Barbara Lahullier, Anna Lisica, Joyce Schwartz, Susan Sacks, Beth Meehan, Dawn Liu, Toni Wagner, Sooja Yoon, Sima Smirnova, Carol Nitori, Janet Suarez, Carol Dimitriades, Linda D'Errico, Hala Saardi, Teresa Kieras, Amrita Singh, Nina Chazen & Mandeep Kaur.

The meeting would not have been as enjoyable without the tasty snacks and enthusiasm provided by this group of volunteers. I would also like to thank the parents who came forward with assistance and refreshments without even being asked. Your community spirit is just what this "freshman mom" was hoping to find at BCA. As a new parent to the school I was concerned about taking on this responsibility, but all of you made my job easy!

Lastly, I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to my co chairs, Keum Sook Chang and Clara Lim. These two women really took the bull by the horns and organized the set up for the evening.

Thank you all again. See you at the next meeting.

— Alyson Cohn, Hospitality Committee

### A Closer Look at College Admissions and Student Behavior

At the Academies we have always had high expectations for student behavior. In this unique learning environment, where students are so focused on academic achievement, good behavior is far more commonplace than bad behavior. Recently, we have observed that colleges are taking a closer look at student behavior during the application process. In past years, school officials have been asked by certain colleges or universities whether or not a student had ever been suspended from school and we would mark "yes" or "no". Thankfully, the response has almost always been "no" due to the number of students who exhibit good decision making skills and proper behavior at the Academies.

However, in what appears to be a response to news headlines across the country regarding improper student behavior on and off college campuses, the colleges are taking a closer look at student behavior during their high school years. For

the first time, the Common Application, used by over three hundred colleges and universities, attempts to address student behavior. Here is an excerpt from this year's Common Application; *"Has the applicant ever been found responsible for a disciplinary violation at your school, whether related to academic or behavioral misconduct that resulted in the applicant's probation, suspension, removal, dismissal, or expulsion from your institution?"*

As school officials we are obligated to answer this question honestly. We would like to be able to answer the question with a "no" for all of our students, but it is dependent on each student's good behavior. Please discuss these changes with your son or daughter. Certainly, the best way to avoid having to explain a school infraction on a college application is to consider the ramifications that a disciplinary infraction might have beforehand.

— Russ Davis, Vice Principal

***Class of 2007:***

**Thank you** to the dedicated parent volunteers who helped with the Welcome Back Senior Breakfast on September 21. The kids had a great time. A special thanks to Mrs. Cosgrove for donating the drinks and paper products. \*\*\* **Thank you** to Chef John Branda who is always available to help us out with our last minute details. We are so grateful! \*\*\* The Senior Class is raffling a monthly parking spot in the upper lot. **Congratulations** to Pat Loughlin who won for the month of October. Tickets for November will be on sale October 16th. \*\*\* The **Art Auction** is Friday, November 17 in the BCA gym. Please attend! The price of your ticket and a percentage of the sold items will go directly to the Senior Class Funds. See the enclosed flyer for more details. \*\*\* Our last **Open House Bake Sale** will be held on **Sunday, November 5.** We need bakers. You have always helped to make this a successful event, please continue to do so. Please bring your baked goods to the upstairs cafeteria between 10 and 10:30 AM. Please contact us if you are able to bake. Mary Ann Hoogerheyde [rncj11@optonline.net](mailto:rncj11@optonline.net) or Hope Anne LoGalbo [sunlover4@aol.com](mailto:sunlover4@aol.com). \*\*\* Don't forget to order your Senior Yearbook. \*\*\* Please give your prompt attention to the many Senior Class forms & flyers that you have received & will receive throughout the year. Pay special attention to dates and deadlines.

***Class of 2008:***

A class trip has been planned, our first since freshman year! The students will be going on a cruise around Manhattan on Wed. Nov. 8th. The day will begin with a breakfast of bagels and juice. The class will depart from school at 9:00 a.m., and return before the end of the school day. Attire is casual. The students will also have their class ring ceremony on board. The cost is \$40/student and includes buffet lunch and a DJ. Ask your student for the permission slip, or find it on the class of 2008 website (accessed from the PPO web page). Would you be interested in being a chaperone? Parent chaperones tickets are also \$40. If you are available, please contact the class advisors or class parents. Any questions about the trip should be directed to the class advisors, Mrs. Buccino, Mrs. Anderson or Mr. Djedji. \*\*\* **2008 Parents Night Out** -- Monday, November 13. We are planning a relaxing evening at Donn Pomodoro's in Hackensack (just a couple of blocks away from BCA) Join other 2008 parents for dinner and conversation! See our flyer in this mailing for details. \*\*\* **Fall Fundraiser** --The class will be selling Sally Foster wrapping paper and other products. The sale will run from Oct. 16-31. The class receives 50% of the amount sold, so we hope to have lots of participation. \*\*\* The students will be selling **popcorn** after school on **Oct. 19th.** \*\*\* **Open House Bake Sale-** Sunday, Nov. 19. We will need bakers, so if you can help in this way, please let Mary or Donna know. The incredible treats that many of you made last year were so

impressive, and very much appreciated! \*\*\* Thanks for all your help and support, Mary & Donna ([malarky@optonline.net](mailto:malarky@optonline.net), [djgorms@aol.com](mailto:djgorms@aol.com))

***Class of 2009***

It has been fun to see kids sporting their gold and black plaid PJs at school! We still have a little inventory left, so we are enclosing an order form for our BCA top quality plaid PJs for your convenience. (We can also send a form via e-mail if you would like.) Forms & checks can be brought to Ms. Kerri Hubbard in Guidance. \*\*\* As our Class Council and Mrs. Cosgrove talked about during our PPO meeting in September, our class has identified several wonderful **Community Outreach activities** for Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Your support and participation will go a long way in making our children's efforts successful. Please contact Mrs. Cosgrove, or your Class Council with any questions or if you are available to volunteer. \*\*\* We are also excited about our next fundraiser timed for the fall and winter holidays -- **home-delivered meals by Schwan's Foods.** This fundraiser is not about ordering bulk foods at a discount price, but delicious meals, side dishes, and/or desserts that will be delivered by truck to the recipient's front door. We set the dates for October 16 – November 3 so you could have delivery by the winter holidays. If you get your order in via the website right away, you could receive it by Thanksgiving (delivery details will be provided when you order). What is especially wonderful is that your family or friends in other states can support the Class of 2009 fundraiser (or receive a wonderful holiday gift) because Schwan's Foods delivers nation wide. There are no additional shipping charges, so have fun picking out your next delicious meal or treat. Go to [www.schwansfundraising.com](http://www.schwansfundraising.com) and enter Campaign # 1002353. \*\*\* Our **Staples Recycling boxes** are available. Please send in your old ink cartridges and toners. Help save our environment and earn money for the Class of 2009! \*\*\* Finally, thanks to all of you who came to our meetings this past month. It was great getting to know each other. Thanks especially to Barbara Farrell, Phyllis Lenkowsky, Toni Wagner, Beth Meehan, and Carol Nitopi who not only came up with additional terrific ideas, but also volunteered to research and/or lead an event. Also, tremendous thanks to Dianne Devine who has been the PJ Project Coordinator. The speedy filling of your children's orders is thanks to her fantastic hard work. It looks like we have a wonderful group of committed parents! Thank you for your invaluable support. Sharon Pierson ([SPcreates@aol.com](mailto:SPcreates@aol.com)) and Carol Blakeslee ([BBester8@optonline.net](mailto:BBester8@optonline.net)).

***Class of 2010***

Your Parent Liaisons are: Angella Mckenzie, 201-287-9191 [gatchair@optonline.net](mailto:gatchair@optonline.net), and Sarah Lucinese, 201-501-0123 [sbo618@excite.com](mailto:sbo618@excite.com).

## Senior Experience Has Begun!!

Congratulations Academy parents and students on securing internship placements for the 2006-2007 school year! The placements are impressive and can be viewed at <http://www.bergen.org/ACADEMY/SeniorExp/>.

As you know, Senior Experience, a unique Academy program that offers an opportunity for learning beyond school walls, is a graduation requirement completed for nine credits. Student interns report directly to their internship every Wednesday when school is in session for a minimum of 6 and maximum of 8 working hours. In case of absence, students must notify their mentor and parents must follow school policy and report Senior Experience absences to the Academy office at 343-6000 ext. 2226. In addition to weekly attendance,

students are required to keep a weekly log, which documents learning and provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their internship experience.

We look forward to another successful year. We encourage you to be involved in your child's internship experience and to communicate with the Senior Experience Program staff if you have any questions or comments. We greatly appreciate feedback regarding the impact of Senior Experience. Please feel free to contact us: Heather Lawler, Senior Experience Coordinator, [healaw@bergen.org](mailto:healaw@bergen.org) 201-343-6000, ext. 2022 or Ronda Marshall, Senior Experience Program Secretary, [ronmar@bergen.org](mailto:ronmar@bergen.org) 201-343-6000, ext. 2023.

Best wishes for an enriching Senior Experience!

### National Latin Honor Society

The National Latin Honor Society (NLHS) functions to spread Latin in our school, with a range of activities & events organized throughout the year, such as Toga Day, field trips, and fundraisers. NLHS is divided into specific concentrations: fundraising, newsletter, banner, tutoring, & field-trip planning. All inducted NLHS members have at least an A- average, and participation can count toward fulfilling the community service requirement. NLHS meets every other Thursday in MC4 at 7:35AM. All grades are welcome to join. The advisor for NLHS is Magister (Dr. Guderian); the googlegroup is [bca-nlhs@googlegroups.com](mailto:bca-nlhs@googlegroups.com). For more information, contact Dr. Guderian at [gregud@bergen.org](mailto:gregud@bergen.org).

As **Back-to-School Night** is fast approaching, I'm sure you are looking forward to meeting the teachers who facilitate the learning that happens on our campus. Each and every one of us is looking forward to meeting each and every one of you: I'm hearing from more and more faculty members who can't wait to shake your hand and praise your children to you in person.

The connection that we teachers have with your children is so strong because of the connection we have with you. Connecting with you throughout the school year is crucial to our collective mission; back-to-school night is our chance to establish that connection if we haven't already. We are so looking forward to seeing you!

— Raymond Bath, Esq., Lead Teacher/Academics

*"How can you frighten a man whose hunger is not only in his own cramped stomach but in the wretched bellies of his children? You can't scare him – he has known a fear beyond every other."*

— John Steinbeck, *Grapes of Wrath*

### >> COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVE <<

We are proud to announce a school-wide food drive to coincide with the November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> performances of our poignant fall play, *The Grapes of Wrath*. This initiative is being coordinated with **The Center for Food Action**, a nonsectarian, not-for-profit organization that runs seven food pantries servicing over 20,000 people in every Bergen County community. They also operate the Statewide Emergency Food and Anti-Hunger Network which is the leading anti-hunger organization in New Jersey.

What better way to support our Bergen County community-at-large at this time of Thanksgiving than by donating these canned goods to our neighbors:

Baked Beans	Turkey Gravy	Coffee	Corn	Pasta in Sauce
Juice	Cranberry Sauce	Fruit Cocktail	Parmalat	String Beans
Apple Pie Filling	Napkins	Sweet Potatoes	Paper Towels	Pumpkin Pie Filling

**Items will be collected in each cafeteria the week of October 30<sup>th</sup> and in the lobby before performances of *The Grapes of Wrath*.**

Please bring as much as you are able when you come to the shows on **Friday, Nov. 3, and Saturday, Nov. 4, at 7:30 p.m.**

***Your generosity is appreciated!***

If you have any questions, please contact Kathie Ventura at [kav23@optonline.net](mailto:kav23@optonline.net).

## Math Team Boosters

The Math Team has kicked off the 2006-07 school year by participating in the Fall Start-Up Event as well as the iTest.

A warm welcome to Mr. Jan Siwanowicz, introduced by Mr. Holbrook to the Math Team Boosters at our last meeting. We are honored to have a Putnam fellow on board at BCA.

The Princeton Invitational Math Competition will be held at Princeton University on December 16th. If you are able to chaperone, please contact Mr. Holbrook or Lalitha Ramakrishnan at [ramakrishnan.lalitha@gmail.com](mailto:ramakrishnan.lalitha@gmail.com).

As they keep honing their own athletic skills,

the Math Team students have been busy coordinating the five grade level tests for the BCA Math Competition they will run on October 22nd. What a terrific experience for our mathletes to "learn by doing" what an enormous amount of volunteer effort goes into executing a successful event of this scope. For many of the 4th through 8th grade participants — affectionately referred to around here as "the little kids" — this first taste of competition math is taken very seriously indeed. It's a great way for our young men and women to give back to the greater math community and to pay it forward to the next crop of budding mathletes!

— Sharon Drucker

## Titanium Knights Robotics

Academy students have set their sights high for 2006-07. Robot warriors involved in NERC (North East Robot Conflict) events have their first meet scheduled for mid- October. In February many more of our teams will attend Motorama, the largest NERC event in our area. We also have interest in the Trinity College Fire Fighting Robot competition and, of course, BattleBotsIQ. BBIQ is our main event for the year and it takes considerable time, effort and funding for our teams to meet these challenges. Plans are underway for a new 120 pound robot, several 15 pound designs plus entries into the task-based and autonomous events. BotsIQ, the non-profit organization responsible for BBIQ, continues to expand and offer new tasks for our young engineers. This year's proposed addition to the program includes a Mini Grand Challenge; where student inventions simulate a baha vehicle that must navigate dessert terrain under its own control.

Plans are also underway for our **Annual Engineering**

**Week Celebration.** If you'd like to help out, please contact Mrs. Rachel Bunin, Engineering Booster Committee Chair, at: [drbunin@verizon.net](mailto:drbunin@verizon.net). Highlights of Eweek 2006 can be found at: <http://www.bergen.org/BattleBots/eweeek06/eweeek.html>. Donations by check for EWeek 2007 can be made out to Student Activities Account—EWeek & mailed to the Hackensack campus.

Many students have asked and yes, we will continue to have our in-house Academy Ant Attack style robot wars in the 4'x4' Knight's Cage. Fall date has yet to be set, but a winter date (during Eweek) and a spring date (BCA Expo 07) have been discussed. To help keep our projects moving forward, donations by check to the Titanium Knights can be made out to Student Activities Account—BattleBots & mailed to the Hackensack campus.

For more information about our group, browse to: [www.bergen.org/BattleBots](http://www.bergen.org/BattleBots), call 201-343-6000 x2211 or email: [jdefalco@bergen.org](mailto:jdefalco@bergen.org).

### KNIGHTS NEWS

Thank you for your support of the BT KNIGHTS Parent Booster Club. We are well on our way to reaching our membership goal. The students of the IGS who wore the most BT Knights colors/apparel on the Pep Rally Day really enjoyed their bagel breakfast. Next Spirit day will be the same day as the winter



Pep Rally. During our last meeting, Roger Forthoff was very informative in his presentation of Drugs and Steroids. If you would like to join our club, need apparel, or have any suggestions, please call Rose at 201-664-3371.

Next meeting is October 19th. Go KNIGHTS!

— Rose Ranuro

## Cultural Connections...

### Theatre Arts News — October 2006



Reserve tickets for *The Grapes of Wrath* by calling our new ticket reservation hot-line 201-343-6000 (ext. 2301) Make checks payable to BCA Student Activities — CCA (students/senior citizens \$8, adults \$10) and send payment to Dr. Rebecca Strum at BCA.

**Director Victoria Pero** shares some thoughts mid-way through the rehearsal period for “*Grapes*”: “Rehearsals for *The Grapes of Wrath* feel very special. After the joyous chaos of *Pippin*, there is something wonderfully grounding in all these Okie accents, ripped-up clothes, beat-up antiques and weather-hardened characters. More than a handful of times, I have looked up at the stage and thought, “you know, they look like the people in this play.” These healthy, smart, articulate, young students are starting to transform themselves into characters light years away from their own reality with an authenticity and grace that is often deeply moving.

We continue to have a large number of students in high-level positions: stage management, assistant director, musical director, choreographers, fight captain, publicist and house managers — giving way to a maturity in the collaboration that is both felt and echoed in the actors' process. Each member of this production has taken on their particular task with a level of seriousness found in a university or professional circumstance, and not only

has it made the process very pleasurable, but it will give way to a high caliber production of which we can all be proud.

Our professional design team has been working closely with our students. Dr. Strum and I continue to try to reflect the professional world in every aspect of our work and each production takes another step forward toward that important goal. Our Lighting Designer is currently assisting at Lincoln Center and our terrific Costume Designer just finished up an award-winning NY Fringe Festival show. Our Set Designer, Stephanie Shultz has joined us as a Wednesday Project teacher. Not only will our shows be beautifully acted, but we hope the design will be stunning as well.”

As we look ahead to trimester two and this year's BCA musical, *Urinetown*, you should know that the pit orchestra musicians are already hard at work with instrumental music director Mike Lemma as the pit orchestra for our musicals runs for two trimesters as a Wednesday project.

Auditions for *Urinetown* are as follows:

- Singing auditions: Monday Nov. 13 or Wed. Nov. 14, after school
- Dance auditions: Tuesday Nov. 14, after school
- Readings & call-backs: Friday Nov. 17. after school.

— Rebecca Strum  
Performing Arts Coordinator

*Don't miss the first play of the 2006-07 season ...*

### *The Grapes of Wrath*

Friday, November 3, at 7:30 p.m. & Saturday, November 4, at 7:30 p.m.

... and please be sure to visit PAPA's refreshment tables each evening where you may also purchase *Kisses for the Cast & Crew* and floral bouquets. Custom floral arrangements may be pre-ordered through Gloria's Flowers at 1-800-536-2056.

**All of PAPA's profits support BCA's choral, instrumental, and theatre programs.**

If you are not already a PAPA member and would like to receive more information, please contact Kathie Ventura at kav23@optonline.net or 201.930.9247.



On Friday, November 17 (7:30-9:00), students in Mr. Lemma's instrumental ensembles will present their Autumn Concert. Ensembles included are: Orchestra, Concert Band, Jazz Ensemble, Guitar & Mandolin Orchestra, World Music Ensemble, String Ensemble, and more! The students are now preparing an impressive program of music and hope to see you there in support of their efforts.

On October 17 we had a visit from a reporter and photographer from the Star Ledger newspaper. They will be running a feature article about our music program, specifically the Guitar & Mandolin Orchestra, one of the few in the country. As you may know, the orchestra received national attention after receiving 2 grants and performing at regional and national music events. Please stay informed about auditions, concerts and more by visiting our website: [www.bergen.org/music](http://www.bergen.org/music).

— Michael Lemma