

# BETHPAGE

## Union Free School District

### NEWSLETTER



## Kramer Lane Nominated as Exemplary Blue Ribbon School

Kramer Lane Elementary School has been selected by the New York State Education Department as a state nominee for the National 2013 Blue Ribbon School Award. The nomination, which is for the category of "Exemplary High Performing School," is based on Kramer Lane's 2012 English language arts and mathematics assessment scores.

Exemplary High Performing Schools are ranked among the best performing schools in the state. The entire school's test scores must meet or exceed the average of the state's cut scores at the 85th percentile for all grades tested in both reading and math. Districtwide, fourth-grade Bethpage students ranked No. 1 in Nassau County for their ELA scores and No. 5 for math, while third-graders were ranked No. 5 in the county for ELA and No. 12 for math.

"I could not be happier and more excited about the nomination," Principal Kerri McCarthy said of the honor. "Kramer Lane is certainly deserving of such an honor. The teachers and students here put forth 110 percent each and every day, as evidenced by not only our success on state assessments, but also by the success students experience on a daily basis. It is wonderful to be a part of such a supportive community where learning is paramount."

Kramer Lane is one of 19 schools in the state that have been nominated for this national award. Ms. McCarthy must now submit an application to the U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Award Committee by mid-February.

## BETHPAGE GRANTED SCHOLARSHIP FOR A REAL CHALLENGE

Sophomores at Bethpage High School participated in the school's sixth annual Challenge Day, which was instituted to provide students with workshops and programs that demonstrate the possibility of friendship and understanding through the celebration of diversity and truth. Throughout the daylong endeavor, tenth-graders took part in numerous activities geared toward getting to know one another, building trust and sharing commonalities.



The program was funded by donations from several organizations including the Bethpage HS PTSA, the Bethpage Educational Foundation, Bethpage Congress of Teachers and a generous \$5,000 grant from MSG Varsity. MSG Varsity's Long Island Manager Jeanne Chillianis presented the check to guidance counselors and coordinators Jay Benjamin and Christine Kennedy in a special check presentation in December. The school was granted the scholarship based upon a recommendation by the district's Dads' Club.

"It's a great character education program that brings students together and lets them see how much more alike they are than different," Superintendent of Schools Terrence Clark said of the highly regarded program. "It really breaks down those barriers between kids. We have found over the years that students really appreciate the program, and it makes a long-lasting difference. Subsequently, we have found that students' behavior improves in school when they come together as one."

## Calendar Revised!

The current 2012-13 school calendar has been revised in order to accommodate the days that the district's schools were closed due to Hurricane Sandy and the Nov. 8 nor'easter.

**School will now remain in session on Feb. 19, 20, 21 and 22.**

These days are no longer part of the previously scheduled mid-winter recess.

Bethpage Union Free School District  
Bethpage, New York 11714

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## A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Residents,

The shock of the school shooting in Newtown, Conn. is still with us and weighs heavily on all of our hearts. It is a horror we all dread. It appears that the teachers and administrators at Sandy Hook Elementary School did all the right things in response to an intruder, and yet a tragedy still unfolded there.

Our paramount duty as a school district is to ensure the safety of your children, and we take that solemn responsibility very seriously. While we also want to foster a positive school environment in each building, I can say, based on recent surveys of school superintendents, that Bethpage is among the most proactive school districts in Nassau County with regard to the security measures we have undertaken to date. With that said, we continue to seek ways to improve on that record.

We are grateful to the residents who voted in May to upgrade our electronic security systems as part of a capital improvement project. That installation is underway right now and will greatly increase the number of surveillance cameras on the outside of our schools. It includes an advanced intrusion detection system, along with an electronic entry system limited to personnel with identification badges. Over the past few years, we have upgraded our PA systems, and all schools have entries that require visitors to be buzzed in by responsible adults.

All of the building administrators, along with me and our director of facilities, attended for the second time the "Active Shooter" workshop presented by the Nassau County Police Department. It is sobering to sit there and listen to law enforcement officials as they plan for each contingency. The video they created simulating an active shooter in a school is powerful to watch. At one point during the presentation, the NCPD highlighted the work we had done with security companies in the Morrelly Homeland Security Center, and they demonstrated a state-of-the-art program currently in place at Bethpage High School. Several districts have called since then to see how the program works.

It is clear that post-Newtown, many Nassau districts are considering placing security guards in elementary schools, an action we took many years ago. Our Westech guards at all five schools are all former law enforcement officials and have demonstrated professionalism and concern for our students over the decade they have been in Bethpage. They serve us well and have established a good rapport with our students, teachers and parents.

All of our schools have had drills of various kinds – lockout, lockdown and evacuation – and we will step up the number of drills we practice each year. We are reviewing our communication systems to ensure our ability to contact all necessary parties in emergency situations.

In the coming weeks we will be having security discussions with all the athletic and civic organizations that use our buildings after hours. One of the best things about Bethpage is that our schools serve as community centers on evenings and weekends and are used by PTA, Scouts, PAL, BBAI, Discovery and many other organizations that contribute to the richness of Bethpage. Everyone will now have to work together to make sure that our children are safe at those events as well.

We are fortunate to live in a community where first responders take their responsibilities so professionally. We are always amazed at how responsive the Bethpage Fire Department is to our calls, as happened this week when a student became suddenly ill; they were here within a few minutes. The Nassau County Police Department has been terrific to us, worked with us on drills, offered advice and stepped up patrols even more since the events in Newtown. Our faculty and staff are also critical first responders in school emergencies, and parents should take great comfort in their demonstrated dedication.

Hundreds of Bethpage students made snowflakes of encouragement that now hang in the new Sandy Hook Elementary School. Each snowflake expresses the ideals of a youngster who wants to offer comfort to others. As adults and educators, we foster those ideals, but we also prepare for the sad realities we hope our children never encounter.

Sincerely,



Terrence Clark  
Superintendent of Schools

## LACROSSE STAR SIGNS LETTER OF INTENT

Ryan Mahon, a senior student-athlete at Bethpage High School, has signed a National Letter of Intent to play lacrosse at Stony Brook University in the fall. The star lacrosse player has held a starting position on the high school team since he was a freshman and will serve as the team captain this season. In addition, Ryan volunteers as a coach for a local elementary lacrosse team and participates in the Long Island Under Armour Lacrosse League.

Ryan was joined at the signing by head coach Irwin Dill, assistant coach Roddy McCoy, Athletic Director John Franchi, High School Principal Michael Spence and parents Laura and Gene Mahon.

"He's an outstanding and highly skilled player," Coach Dill said of Ryan, who is also an honor student. Ryan intends to major in health sciences in college.



## Pink the Rink

The Bethpage Eagles varsity ice hockey team took on the Syosset Braves in their annual "Pink the Rink" game to benefit the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Research Foundation. As a result of the fundraiser, which required team members to wear pink, over \$600 in donations were raised at the game. The spirited and generous Bethpage fans showed up, also sporting pink, to root for their team.



# Third-Graders Read to Achieve



Prior to the Thanksgiving holiday break, third-grade students throughout the district gathered at Bethpage High School to participate in a pep rally intended to pump up their interest in reading and to reiterate its importance in their future academic careers. “We have a great tradition of academic excellence in Bethpage and we are looking forward to you all carrying on that tradition,” Superintendent of Schools Terrence Clark said in his opening remarks to the students.

A tradition for more than a decade, the program included interactive dialogue from many district administrators regarding their favorite books and the role of imagination in reading. Principal Michael Spence discussed how thankful he was for his students who put in maximum effort every day. “You may struggle with some academic concepts right now, but if you read and you give 100 percent each and every day, you will succeed,” he advised, speaking from his own personal experience.

The two-hour event also featured remarks from many special guests, including Plainview-Bethpage Lions Club President George Hannau, who distributed dictionaries to each of the third-graders. The Dictionary Project provides an opportunity for students to expand their vocabulary while aiding teachers in their goal to ensure all their students finish the school year as good writers, active readers and creative thinkers. This is the second year that the dictionaries, which also serve as almanacs, were distributed by the Lions Club.

Third-graders were split into teams, under the direction of high school sports captains and scholar-athletes, and each of the young students was assigned to one of the seniors. The senior athletes guided their teams through basketball- and hockey-style sports challenges while members of the cheerleading squad led students in reading cheers. Throughout the year, these captains will forge relationships with their third-grade counterparts and visit them in their classrooms, as well as share their favorite books.

## DICTIONARY DONATIONS

*Members of the Lions Club are pictured with Superintendent of Schools Terrence Clark and some third-grade students with their dictionaries.*



## Every Vote Counts

At each of the schools throughout the district, students had engaged in much discussion on the presidential election. At many of the schools, students held their own mock elections to cast their vote in the big race. The experience offered students a valuable lesson on exactly how the voting process works and served to reinforce the idea that every vote counts.

*A student from John F. Kennedy Middle School casts her vote in a mock presidential election.*



# Athletes Helping Athletes

Forty-six student-athletes in grades 10-12 participate in the high school's Athletes Helping Athletes program. These student-leaders train under Molloy College athletes and serve as positive mentors and role models to fifth- and sixth-grade students throughout the district. They take a pledge to remain drug-, alcohol- and tobacco-free and to act as "upstanders" in their community. Several times throughout the year, the high school athletes visit their younger counterparts and work with them to foster sportsmanship, civility and healthy choices through interactive workshops and exercises.

"The importance of this program is that it creates a direct connection between our student leaders and a younger generation," said program adviser Mike Fenster, who teaches health and physical education at the high school and middle school. "Our student-leaders serve as positive role models and pass on valuable character traits, lessons and experiences through their interaction."

The program, which has been in place for approximately 20 years, also serves the community by hosting many fundraisers and drives to benefit the less fortunate.

Members of Athletes Helping Athletes are pictured with students during a workshop at Charles Campagne Elementary School. During this introductory session, the students conducted icebreaking activities and learned about the importance of teamwork.



## Over the Moon for Astronomy

It was an "out-of-this-world" celebration on Nov. 30 at Bethpage High School, as students in grades K-5 enjoyed the district's ninth annual Astronomy Night.

Guided by student volunteers from the high school, the younger students and their families had the opportunity to select up to three astronomy-based workshops, including Space Bingo, Star-nival, Space Scouts and other unique options. A Starlab digital planetarium was also on display, where students were able to view a multimedia presentation full of amazing facts and anecdotes about the night sky.

Among the other notable workshops were Solar System Jewelry, where students created interplanetary bracelets featuring the solar system, and a Storytime stop for students to learn about the solar system. A stargazing workshop had been planned in honor of the 403rd anniversary of Galileo's telescope, but overcast skies forced that portion of the evening to be canceled. Students also enjoyed Hollywood Planets, a game show-themed workshop where contestants sought advice from the audience on questions about astronomy.



# Creating Healthy Schools

School districts across the country are responsible for adhering to new federal standards, which are intended to create healthier options on the standard lunch menu and ensure that the new “choose my plate” food guidelines (pictured at right) are being followed. The “choose my plate” model replaces the former “food pyramid” in terms of outlining how much of each food group should comprise the standard meal to meet an individual’s daily requirements for nutrition.

Under the new model and federal guidelines, these are the changes that have taken place this year, each of which incorporate healthier food choices for students:

- 51% of offered grains per week are whole grains
- Increased fruit and vegetable offerings
- Limit on the amount of protein that can be served per week
- Average calories per meal must fall within the defined ranges for each age/grade group
- Average saturated fat content per meal must be less than 10% of total calories
- K-2 students are required to take one offering from each of the five components of the “plate” – dairy, fruit, grains, protein and vegetables – while grades 3-12 must take three of the five offerings to comprise their “plate.”

“We have actually gone above these guidelines and tend to offer even more fruit and vegetable choices than necessary. The district wants to ensure the students have a wide variety to choose from so that they can create their ‘plate’ without hesitation,” food service director Grace Maschinski said of the program.

The district was proactive in its approach to these changes, as it had already begun offering healthier meals last year and had completely eliminated fried foods from the menu.

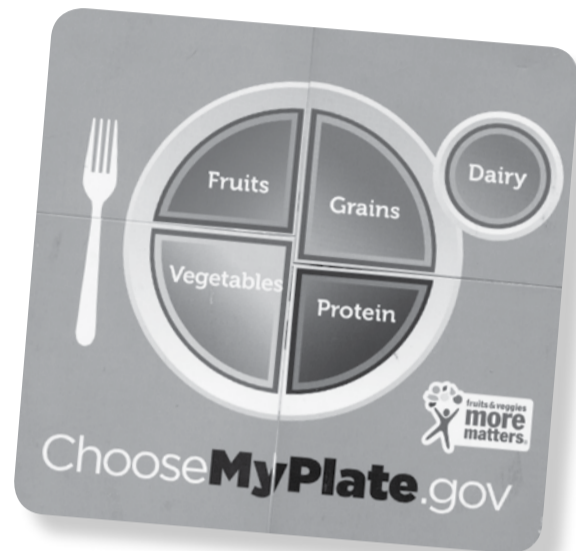
“The facilities here are unbelievable,” Ms. Maschinski said. “The district has invested in its equipment, and the outcome is that students are getting real home-cooked foods as their hot lunch offerings in school.”

While the menu may seem similar to an old menu on certain days – such as with a pizza or hot dog offering – the quality of the food is far superior now. Pizza is made with whole-grain crust, reduced-sodium pasta sauce and reduced-fat cheese, while hot dogs are no longer beef-based, but rather turkey dogs served on a whole-grain bun.

“It’s important that we pull traditional kid favorites while also incorporating and exposing kids to some traditional ethnic cuisines, like Mexican or Italian dishes,” Ms. Maschinski shared. And as always, any child with a food allergy will be sure to have

options available every day that satisfy their dietary requirements.

The entire food service program, including lunch menus and an FAQ, can be viewed on the district’s website at [www.bethpagecommunity.com](http://www.bethpagecommunity.com).



Students at Charles Campagne work in the garden, which harvests fruit and vegetables in the spring.

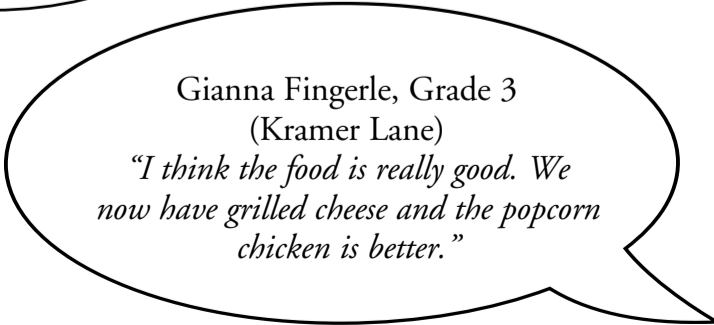
## In Their Own Words...



Shannon Imbornoni,  
Grade 8  
*“I think the new menu items are really good; the food tastes great.”*



Sean Dalton, Grade 6  
*“I liked the food before, but I like it even better now. The meals are really good and really healthy. The meatball hero is my favorite.”*



Gianna Fingerle, Grade 3  
(Kramer Lane)  
*“I think the food is really good. We now have grilled cheese and the popcorn chicken is better.”*

# News Around Our

## TECHING IT to the Next Level

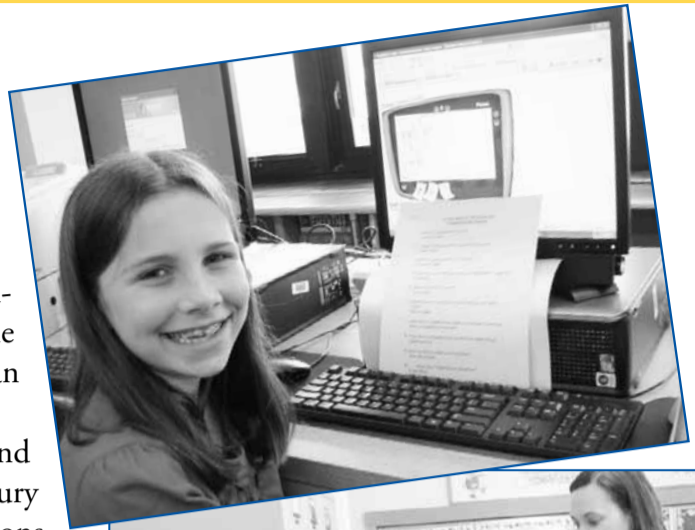
Central Boulevard School is offering a new Technology Club to its fifth-grade students this year. Under the guidance of teacher Laura Miniero, the after-school program has been broken down into a total of 12 sessions in an effort to teach students integral technology capabilities.

"I felt we needed to get students into using more technology that is free and safe, which facilitates educational goals and introduces them to the 21st century skills that they will need to succeed," said Ms. Miniero, explaining her reasons for starting the club.

The club members have tackled subjects such as how to navigate different websites and create any content they may need for school by utilizing various programs. The students' projects include creating a comic strip, a slideshow and avatars of themselves.

"I was interested in learning how to make PowerPoints and exploring websites and learning how to use them," fifth-grader Valarie Bracken said of why she joined the club.

All websites and tools are prescreened and safe for students to use on their own at home or in school. The club will also have a spring session for interested students.



## LEARNING THE Electrical Ropes

It was an electrifying afternoon for fourth-grade students at Charles Campagne Elementary School when they received a visit from a Long Island Power Authority representative. Using props and equipment, the LIPA representative guided students through the basics of electricity and how it is made and distributed to homes all over Long Island. He shared basic electrical safety tips and explained the safety equipment that workers need to use when fixing electrical lines for customers. Through a live electrical demo, the representative showed students how electricity is conducted and how dangerous a live wire can be. Pictured is a highlight from the visit.

## Trotting for Turkeys

In the week leading up to Thanksgiving, kindergartners through fifth-graders at Central Boulevard School donated money to participate in the school's annual Turkey Trot coordinated by the physical education department. Students and staff were asked to donate 25 cents in order to walk the school field for 30 minutes and raise money for Thanksgiving baskets. For the past 11 years, the school has annually donated approximately 25 baskets of stuffing, cranberry sauce and turkeys to the Knights of Columbus, which delivers the filled baskets to local families in need. Baskets are created by each class as well as by staff members. The Trot raised \$412, which facilitated the purchase of any additional basket items.



*Pictured are fifth-graders, among the first to complete their trot, in front of a giant turkey adorned with feathers added by the participants.*

# Elementary Schools

## Sounds of the Seasons

Elementary schools around the district celebrated the holiday season with their annual winter concerts. Fifth-graders took the stage to show off their musical talents, first for staff and fellow students as part of a day program, and later for their parents during an evening performance at the high school. At Charles Campagne Elementary School, the concert featured performances by the band, vocal ensemble, orchestra, chorus and recorder ensemble. The groups sang traditional holiday favorites, in addition to some beginner classics.



Pictured are some highlights from the Charles Campagne performance for staff and students.



## Students Make Apple Cider

Nothing says autumn like apple cider! Students at Kramer Lane Elementary School had the opportunity to press their very own apple cider under the guidance of instructors from Nassau BOCES. The program included a brief introduction that recapped the history of apple cider, the many different types and tastes of apples, and how the pressing process works. Students then actively participated in the prepping and pressing of apples to create cider, followed by a chance to sample the cider they helped press.



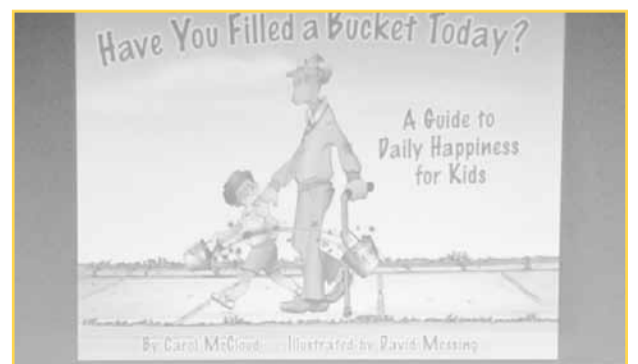
## School Full of

# BUCKETFILLERS

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade at Kramer Lane Elementary School “filled their buckets” with a special presentation by Carol McCloud, author of “Have You Filled a Bucket Today?” The book’s premise, which also serves as a character education component for the school, is that everyone walks around with an invisible bucket that gets filled every time they are nice to others and others are nice to them in return. The author hosted a workshop with students, during which she thoroughly explained how to fill someone else’s bucket as well as their own. “I saw hearts and stars filling this room because everyone’s buckets were so full,” Ms. McCloud told the group of K-2 students.

Students left the workshop with rules such as “be a bucketfiller” and “do your best not to dip into other’s buckets,” and with the challenge to fill the bucket of someone special that day.

Teachers, who had already been implementing some of the “bucketfiller” analogies into their classrooms, were also trained as part of a professional development series by Ms. McCloud. The instructor workshop taught teachers how to utilize bucketfiller vocabulary and tactics to make their school year one of the most rewarding ever for their students and themselves.



# Mark Your Calendars!

## Budget Development Dates

As the district begins its discussion on the 2013-14 school budget, we urge all residents to participate in our budget development process. These meetings will provide an opportunity for community members to express their opinions, to ask questions, and to hear explanations of the "tax levy cap." We look forward to seeing you at these meetings.

**Tuesday, Feb. 26**

Board of Education Business Meeting 8 p.m. @ BHS

**Tuesday, April 30**

Board of Education Business Meeting 8 p.m. @ CCS

**Tuesday, March 19**

Board of Education Business Meeting 8 p.m. @ CBS

**Tuesday, May 14**

Budget Hearing 8 p.m. @ BHS

**Tuesday, May 21**

**School Budget Vote & Trustee Election 7am-9pm @ BHS**

## Kindergarten Registration

The district is conducting kindergarten registration for its three elementary schools for the 2013-2014 school year. Children born before December 1, 2008, are eligible for enrollment.

Parents should contact the main office of each school prior to registration to receive paperwork that can be completed in advance: KLS: 644-4500; CBS: 644-4300; CCS: 644-4400. To determine your child's school, please call 644-4040. Registration will take place at the respective schools during normal school hours.

## Private/Parochial School Transportation Reminder

Parents of students attending private parochial schools should note that the deadline to submit your transportation request is April 1, 2013. For more information, please call 644-4040.

## TAX CODE

The Bethpage School District Code Number for New York State Tax Returns is 052.

Please be certain to fill in the number in the appropriate space provided on your tax returns. School aid can be affected if the school district or code is incorrect or missing.

## Emergency Closing of Schools

Arrangements have been made to notify the general public whenever schools are to be closed because of weather conditions. A ConnectEd message will be made to all homes. If schools are to be closed, the announcement will be posted on the district website: [www.bethpagecommunity.com](http://www.bethpagecommunity.com) and will be broadcast intermittently over the following stations:

WCBS (880 AM)

News 12 Long Island  
(Channel 12)

WINS (1010 AM)

FiOS 1 (Channel 1)

Union Free School District  
**BETHPAGE**

NEWSLETTER

A Publication of the Bethpage School District's  
Community Relations Office

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