

Bethpage Union Free School District

BETHPAGE

NEWSLETTER

Your Community Schools

One of the things that makes Bethpage such a special place is the community spirit shared by so many. The School District is central to that mission. There is a great deal of talk on the national level of making schools the center of the community, and Bethpage is already way ahead in that regard. Working with the PTAs, the Dad's Club, Moms and Dads for Music, the PAL, the Bethpage Baseball Association, the Bethpage-Plainview Rotary Club and local government officials, Bethpage Schools have been in the spotlight this fall for dozens of positive events.

At the start of the school year, the District's new athletic complex, built by the Town of Oyster Bay, was unveiled. The Board of Education and Central Administration, along with students and staff, are thankful to the Town Board and Supervisor John Venditto for making this a reality. Bethpage is the envy of many neighboring communities. The football, soccer and track teams have already enjoyed playing in the new facility, and the lacrosse teams are looking forward to playing there this spring. This fantastic facility is also used by many PAL athletes at night and on weekends, and was home to the first ever Bethpage 5K Run and Tara Costa Fitness Fair in which over 500 runners participated.

A new program that the District takes pride in is TGIF@BHS, which was created under the direction of Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics John Franchi, to provide an activity center within the High School for teenagers on Friday nights. The first evening was a tremendous success with over 270 students, and the second one was even bigger! Activities included basketball, dodgeball, movies, ping pong, sumo wrestling and swimming! The program's objective is to offer a safe place for teenagers to hang out on Friday nights, and it will present many more evenings, including several for middle school students.

The District recently had its Sixth Annual Astronomy Night! Over 700 people attended this event, at which students of all ages attended workshops that centered on planets, stars and galaxies. The Bethpage PTSA held its first Safe Halloween Party, which was a tremendous hit with over 1500 attendees. Finally, the Harlem Magic Masters took on the JFK Middle School faculty in a game played at Bethpage High School on November 6th. The gymnasium was packed and the faculty team displayed great talent and enthusiasm!

These events all have several things in common: They demonstrate the shared community spirit in Bethpage, they provide families with opportunities to participate together, and they unite generations in meaningful projects. Bethpage schools will continue to be busy places for community events as we enter into the holiday season, with food drives for those less fortunate, winter concerts featuring talented student musicians, a fall production of the High School Masquers' Guild, and even a Senior Citizens Cheer Squad that High School Cheerleading team members will work with. Bethpage is fortunate to have such an active extracurricular calendar, provided by local organizations, senior citizens, parents, faculty, staff and administrators who work together to support the shared mission of providing a nurturing environment to children.



Bethpage Union Free School District
Bethpage, New York 11714

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Dear Residents,

The theme of this issue of the newsletter is the community school concept. This is an important topic on the national level. Articles are being written on the idea of opening up schools to accommodate local community organizations and to make schools the hub of the neighborhood. Those advocating this concept should visit Bethpage to see it in action. As a community, we are proud of our schools for their academic record, but equally proud of the role our schools play in the daily life of so many of our residents.

We have had a very busy fall season with lots of festivities in all our schools! Our nights and weekends have been packed with family events like Astronomy Night, Homecoming, Safe Halloween and the Harlem Magic Masters and of course, the opening of the new Bethpage Athletic Complex (thanks to the Town of Oyster Bay). We just started our TGIF@BHS program where we open up the High School as an activity center on Friday nights. We are grateful to all the parents, teachers and staff who have worked so hard on these projects. Our PTAs have done a great job working with us to get more families involved in these events and they make our community much richer for the shared experiences.

In addition, you will see articles in this newsletter on the generous donation of dictionaries by the Bethpage-Plainview Rotary Club to every third grader in the District. We are also grateful to the Bethpage Baseball Association, which has generously donated funds to renovate some of our athletic facilities. And Cablevision

has donated video equipment for a new project at the High School. They are also sponsoring our annual Read to Achieve Program this fall. Several corporations assist us with our 21st Century Scholars' Program for middle and high school students. Schools from around the nation are contacting us to learn more about this important initiative.

We are pleased, too, that the Discovery organization is able to provide important childcare resources to our parents. And our Continuing Education Program is in full swing with dozens of courses on a wide range of interesting topics. Our buildings open to students in the early morning hours and close late into the evening. They get a lot of use!

We also face some tough challenges ahead. The fiscal problems of New York State may adversely affect our own budget. We are preparing for the possibility of mid-year budget cuts. We are reviewing where we can prudently cut back now, to prepare for the uncertain future. We continue to see where local government, corporate friends and community organizations can assist us with our educational mission.

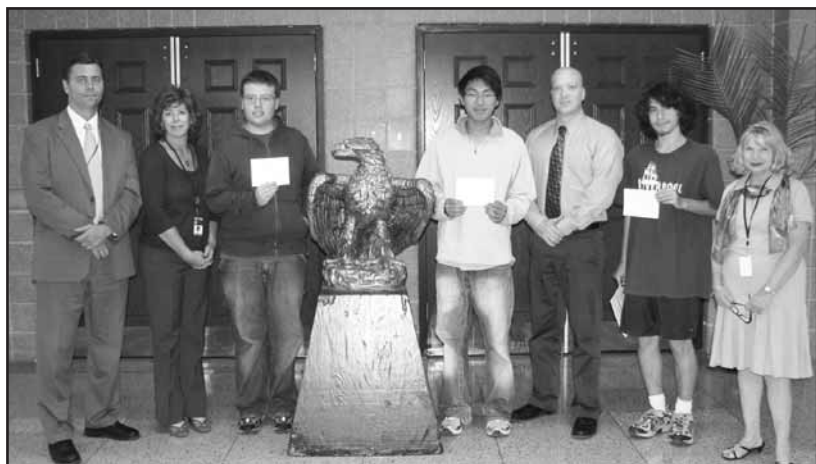
Thanks for all the support provided to me in my first few months as Superintendent and I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season.

Sincerely,



Terrence Clark
Superintendent of Schools

Three BHS Seniors Recognized as Commended Students



Bethpage High School Principal Michael Spence, Guidance Counselor Meg Scanlon, Michael Natalie, Bert Geng, Guidance Counselor James Benjamin, Andrew Marrell, and Director of Guidance Pamela Puglisi.

Three seniors were recently named National Merit Commended Students in the 2010 National Merit Scholarship Program, an honor bestowed by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). Congratulations to Bert Geng, Andrew Marrell, and Michael Natalie for their academic successes that led to this recognition.

More than 1.5 million students entered the competition by taking the 2008 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), and Bert, Andrew, and Michael are among the top five percent. They are all National Honor Society members who are solidly involved in school and community activities beyond their everyday classes.

Bert serves as Cross-Country Team captain and is a member of the Track and Tennis Teams. He also participates in the Philosophy Club, Student Civic Association, Students Putting an End to Cancer (SPEC), and Chess Team, and plans to study biomedical engineering in college. Andrew contributes as a member of both the Tennis and Winter Track Teams, and is also involved in the High School's Robotics Club and Mathletes. Michael takes part in Student Government, Student Civic, Philosophy Club, and Robotics Club, and intends to focus his college studies on science.

Staff Development Continues

Bethpage staff members have attended two Superintendent's Conference Days since the onset of the 2009-10 school year. The first was held the day before classes began, and included a welcoming, recap of last year's highlights, and an afternoon workshop.



Prior to the start of the school year, new teachers in Bethpage were provided with an orientation of the District, which included a bus tour. Additionally, all faculty participated in two Superintendent's Conferences, one the day before school started, another on Election Day.

On September 8th, Superintendent of Schools Terrence Clark provided a detailed synopsis of the 21st Century Learning Initiative's purpose and the positive experiences it provides. Mr. Clark also discussed the importance of school-community outreach efforts, the impact of awards and honors earned by students, musical and artistic achievements, traditions such as the Senior Citizen Prom and Democracy in Action, and prestigious opportunities such as Northrop Grumman internships for high school students. Later in the day, faculty met with their respective principals to prepare for the arrival of students.

"I believe the most important factor in the academic success of children is the classroom teacher," Mr. Clark told staff members. "I believe we have an incredibly gifted faculty and staff in Bethpage and that is a big reason why we are so successful."

On November 3rd, when schools were closed for Election Day, staff members participated in various workshops held at each building. Topics included: "Special Education Testing Modifications," "Admission to College and the Teacher Recommendation" (presented by N.Y.I.T. Vice President for Enrollment Dr. Jacquelyn Nealon), "Analyzing Error Patterns of Level 3 and 4 Students," and a number of other workshops focusing on key subject areas such as math and literacy.

A HOMECOMING VICTORY UNDER THE LIGHTS

The clouds and rain did not stop school spirit from shining at Bethpage High School for the 2009 Homecoming parade and football game on Saturday, October 24th, when students and community members alike came out to show their Golden Eagle pride. The game marked the first time the Homecoming Football Game was held under the lights (the result of a rain postponement), and Bethpage High School's athletic complex served as the setting for the team's second straight victory.

As is traditional in Bethpage, the parade

kicked off at the King Kullen shopping center and continued down Stewart Avenue to the high school. The marching band led the group, and floats representing each grade level, as well as two kickline teams, followed. Students, staff, and residents later made their way into the gymnasium for the annual float competition.

The "Kickboxin' Kickliners" JV Kickline Team, "Kicking Butt in Martial Arts" Golden Girls Varsity Kickline Team, "First Place Freshmen," "Sophomore Snacks," "Jersey Shore

Jacked Juniors," and "Slam Dunk Seniors" presented the float displays, skits, and choreographed routines they prepared. The sophomores, sharing a creative song-and-dance performance about healthy foods, were named the winners.

Golden Eagles Varsity Football also gave spectators something to smile about, with a 20-14 come-from-behind win over Great Neck North. Bethpage's Chris Romanelli, Rob Cafiero, and James Murphy each ran for a touchdown in the second half, with Rob adding a two-point conversion run.



Generosity is an EDUCATIONAL EFFORT

For the second year, the Bethpage-Plainview Rotary Club and Nassau Educators Federal Credit Union (NEFCU) teamed up to provide all Bethpage third graders with dictionaries and almanacs (gazeteers) that the children can use now and all the way up through high school.

Superintendent Terrence Clark accompanied Rotary Vocational Service Director George Hannau and NEFCU Membership Development Coordinator Michael Ferraro to each third-grade classroom in Central Boulevard, Charles Campagne, and Kramer Lane Elementary Schools, where they delivered the gazeteers and explained the range of contents.

The Rotary initiated this endeavor in 2007, and last year NEFCU stepped in to provide funding for the gazeteers. The partnership was successful and the two groups decided to once again work together to lend a hand in the community. The gazeteers, in addition to being comprehensive dictionaries, feature biographies of U.S. Presidents, facts about the planets in the solar system, maps of the seven continents, weights and measures, information on the 50 states, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and much more.



Gazeteers were hand-delivered to each student in all three schools.



At Central Boulevard School, Mrs. Holt's third-grade students display their new books.



5K Run for Education and Fitness Nets Over \$10,000 for Bethpage Educational Foundation

The Bethpage Day 5K Tara Costa Run for Education and Fitness was a great success, with a huge turnout at Bethpage High School that netted more than \$10,000 in proceeds for the Bethpage Educational Foundation. Attendees of all ages were excited to participate in the run and visit the various booths displayed in the school's hallways for a health fair that followed.

This event was a collaborative effort of Race Director and community member Victor Macaluso, the Bethpage School District, and Bethpage High School alumna/NBC's "The Biggest Loser" television program runner-up Tara Costa. Ms. Costa, who lost 155 pounds by the show's Season 7 finale, ran the 5K and was on-site all day to meet and greet participants and spread her enthusiasm for healthy lifestyles.

The 5K run began at the Town of Oyster Bay Ice Skating Rink at

Bethpage Community Park and ended on the new High School athletic field. Several District students and staff members were among the 459 runners who completed the course. The overall male winner was Daniel Kant, who also took the "Bethpage Cup" as first Bethpage male resident with a time of 17:18. The overall female winner was Erin Silvering-Grey of Levittown, with a time of 18:42, and the "Bethpage Cup" female recipient was resident Laura Gluf, with a time of 20:53.

More than 50 vendors exhibited products and services during the fair, mostly related to health, wellness, and fitness. Representatives from local health clubs, medical facilities, and a number of health-industry companies were present to share information and provide giveaways. Guests were treated to massages, blood pressure tests, exercise demonstrations, food and product samples, and much more.



Phys. Ed. Program Gets Students Moving in the Right Direction

Bethpage High School is encouraging students to live active lifestyles and try new things through a variety of Physical Education activities they can enjoy. Thanks to an enthusiastic staff, students are offered classes such as dance and aerobics, in addition to traditional gym and athletics programs.

Mr. Stephen Franzke brought dance instruction into the school this year after leading a successful Cha-Cha dancing exercise as part of the 21st Century Learning Initiative last spring. In his current classes, students learn Hip-Hop, Cha-Cha, Salsa, Hustle, Swing, Rumba, Waltz, and Foxtrot dances. The course has brought a new and exciting element to the school's already popular Physical Education program, and has been positively received by participating students.

Aerobics is also offered as part of the school's Physical Education curriculum, and is comprised of cardio-kickboxing, balance ball, dance, swimming, cooperative games, conditioning, gymnastics, yoga, step aerobics, and Pilates, complemented by an emphasis on nutrition. Additionally, Bethpage High School provides a lifeguarding class in which students earn their lifeguard certifications and are trained in first aid and CPR. Also available is a fitness for life course that teaches advanced techniques for students interested in weight training.

These classes are yet another way that the District has expanded opportunities to suit a variety of student interests.



● Safeguards Against Seasonal, H1N1 Flu ●

The District would like to remind students, family members, and school staff that preventing the spread of flu is a collaborative effort in which everyone should play their part. Seasonal and H1N1 Influenza A can spread quickly in large group settings, and the community must work collaboratively to keep everyone safe and healthy. It is important that students, staff, and visitors who feel sick stay home.

The website www.flu.gov, managed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, has listed the following guidelines for steps that can be taken every day to help keep you, your child, and others healthy:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE HELPS SET STUDENTS ON A HEALTHY NUTRITIONAL PATH

In conjunction with National School Lunch Week, the District introduced new lunch display boards in each of its five schools. Reflective of the daily menu offering options, the lunch boards were developed with the goal of encouraging students to select nutritious lunches. These lunch boards are also designed to help expedite the lunch line process, while providing a visual connection to the monthly menu of food images and/or descriptions that are appealing to each age group.

Each lunch board is divided into categories that make it easy for students to identify the various food groups and understand how many items they may select as part of the complete cost of a school lunch. Within each category are stick-on images of various foods and drinks, which are updated each day to reflect the current menu.

The new boards (pictured top right) contain a combination of “kid-friendly” illustrations and photographs of meals, side dishes, and beverages, varied depending on grade level. The titles of the items are connected to the pictures so that students know exactly what to order.

After assessing the food services program, the District felt that students did not always look through the entire lunch menu each day, and in some cases, were not aware of all their options. Working with a nutrition consultant, the boards were designed and completed through the collaborative efforts of Nutrition Consultant J. Bigley, Assistant Superintendent for Business Joseph Marchesiello, Account Clerk Maria Karambatsakis, Duplicating Machine Operator Elizabeth Skrypek, and Aramark Food Services Frontline Manager Kim Erker.

Ribbon cuttings (lower right) were held in each building to reveal the boards, and cafeteria staff members, known as Bethpage’s “A” Teams, were honored by the District with special pins in recognition of their hard work, courtesy, and smiles that result in healthy and seamless lunch periods each day.

The District will be following up on the effectiveness of the lunch boards with surveys to students for their views and input. The District is also planning an initiative to recognize the students who purchase and consume the most number of complete meals throughout the school year.



Broadening the Educational Experience Through Clubs and Activities

Bethpage students at all age levels are offered an assortment of after-school clubs and activities. These opportunities began shortly after the school year commenced in September and enhance the educational experience by enabling students to pursue their individual interests.

In the elementary schools, students were eager to become involved in activities such as Scrabble Club, Art Club, and Peers Club at Central Boulevard School; Drama Club, Math Club, Word Masters Club, Science Club, and Library Club at Kramer Lane School; and Scrabble Club, Performing Arts Club, Math Club, and Technology Club at Charles Campagne School.

JFK Middle School held an activity fair to introduce students to the programs available such as Yearbook, Science/Technology Research, Mathletes, Drama, Art Club, Astronomy Club, Earthbound Club, and more.

Bethpage High School offers more than 25 extracurricular activities including Chess Club, Drama Club, Explorations Club, Literary Magazine, Newspaper, Philosophy Club, Robotics Club, SADD, and Student Civic Association.



Second Step Underway at JFK



JFK Middle School has implemented the Second Step Program, an initiative that aims to prevent risky behaviors among students and improve school success through skills emphasized in the classroom. Second Step has been utilized in schools since 1987 and is recognized worldwide for its ability to teach social-emotional skills that reduce aggression and increase social competence.

The program builds skills that are valuable in helping students gain the most from school and life experiences. These skills include Empathy, Communication, Perspective Taking, Respectful Disagreement, Negotiation and Compromise, Emotion Management, Coping with Stress, and Decision-Making.

In laying the groundwork for the program's institution, JFK sent seven "turnkey teachers" for training during the spring of 2009. These staff members shared the new knowledge with their colleagues and coached them in bringing Second Step principles into their classrooms. Now, the initiative is well underway as JFK teachers present program lessons each month.

The class sessions typically involve audio and visual components with video clips, group discussions, and worksheets that prompt students to apply their skills as they examine various situations. Each classroom is also equipped with four posters provided by the Second Step Program, which present important reminders for Coping with Stress, Bystander Power, Action Steps, and Staying in Control.

While the Second Step Program is new to JFK, its benefits have already become a feature at Kramer Lane Elementary School, where the initiative was first introduced as a pilot program in the fall of 2008 after teachers were trained that spring. At the elementary level, Second Step focuses on Empathy Training, Impulse Control and Problem Solving, and Anger Management as its three primary areas. Teachers from Central Boulevard and Charles Campagne Elementary Schools have also attended training so that they can eventually introduce the program in those buildings, as well.

COLLEGE READY

Bethpage High School's Guidance Department has been busy preparing students for college, taking them through the application and decision-making steps and hosting programs to provide assistance. Among



these initiatives was a Grade 12 Parent Meeting that focused on preparing seniors and their families for the road ahead, and a series of college mini-fairs held during the school day.

The Parent Meeting featured two guest speakers, SUNY Farmingdale Director of Admissions Jim Hall and Hofstra University Dean of Admissions Jessica Eads. Mr. Hall discussed how to apply for financial aid and scholarships, as well as developing a plan for finding the right educational institution. Ms. Eads concentrated on deciding which schools to apply to and how to go about researching them online and through the Guidance Department.

The mini-college fairs were held in September and October, and featured representatives from more than 90 colleges and universities. Seniors had the opportunity to attend the fairs, ask questions, and gather pamphlets and brochures, as well as other materials displayed at a number of booths in the school's library.

The Bethpage High School Guidance Department is available throughout the year to help students review their options, determine areas of study, complete application forms, and much more.

21ST CENTURY LEARNING CONTINUES

The enthusiastic launch of the 21st Century Learning Initiative in the 2008-2009 school year has led to another collection of unique opportunities to suit all types of student interests. Reintroduced this past September in both JFK Middle School and Bethpage High School, the program is well underway, providing students with new experiences and, consequently, creating a highly enriched educational environment.

Students have already had opportunities to go mountain biking, visit the University of Princeton, tour a Titanic Exhibit, discuss books in various literary circles, lead safe and enjoyable Halloween activities for younger children in the District, attend HD live telecasts of the opera at Westbury Cinema 12, and participate in many more activities. They were also able to obtain 21st Century credit while giving back to their community and helping others through a Lupus Walk, AHRC Disability Walk, and the Bethpage Day 5K Run for Fitness and Education.

Students can continue their 21st Century participation through 12th grade, and may accumulate credit for development and maintenance of online portfolios in which they are asked to record their experiences. Bethpage High School students who complete the portfolio will receive a 21st Century Scholar Diploma, which is endorsed by Cablevision, Cisco, Northrop

Grumman, Johnson Controls, and other corporate partners of the District.

This will be the first full school year that the program is offered at JFK, as it was first made available to the middle school students last spring. Superintendent Terrence Clark, who spearheaded the program in the District, visited JFK in September to discuss the initiative's goals, benefits, and details with students in each grade. He also presented a slideshow with photos highlighting some of the most memorable activities from last year, such as the Scrabble Club, Bethpage State Park tour, Technology and Exploratory Camps, and etiquette class, as well as trips to Tobay Beach, Ellis Island, and the Statue of Liberty.

Mr. Clark also described the long-term advantages of the program. He emphasized the major role technology plays in today's world and noted that there are new jobs that did not exist before, communicating that the program is valuable in preparing students for



Superintendent of Schools Terrence Clark describes the 21st Century Learning Initiative to students at JFK Middle School. This is the program's second year running at the High School, and first full year at JFK, after being introduced in March of 2009.

the road ahead as these areas expand even further.

"This program is about introducing you to new things and giving you all these opportunities in hopes that you will find something that really interests you, that you might want to follow later on," Mr. Clark explained. He then provided step-by-step instructions for joining Listserv, the e-mail resource that keeps students up to date with the latest 21st Century opportunities and information.

◆ REACHING FOR THE STARS ◆

Bethpage High School hosted a successful Astronomy Night in October, when children and parents gathered for the annual opportunity to explore the universe and beyond.

As a new component of the event, a Starnival was featured in the gymnasium, where children visited various stations to play games and partake in other fun activities based on the astronomy theme, sharpening their knowledge of the subject. The attractions were designed for students, by students, as middle and high school volunteers received 21st Century credit for creating and leading the stations. Included were face painting, Saturn's Rings hoola hoop, the Black Hole toss, Rocky Planets hockey, star- and planet-related bowling and frisbee challenges, and many more entertaining

opportunities. Astronomy Club members assisted as well, sharing some of their expertise on planets, moons, galaxies, constellations, and more.

This was also the first year that the evening kicked off with a keynote speech by Dr. Kevin Manning, a former NASA consultant. Dr. Manning discussed the size and scale of the universe and led workshops during which students had opportunities to take pictures of celestial objects using telescopes.

Highlights of Astronomy Night also included a Starlab portable planetarium, which gave attendees a realistic look at the stars, planets, and constellations, and a projector-enlarged reading of *Zoo in the Sky*, a book of animal constellations written by Jacqueline Mitton and Christina Balit.



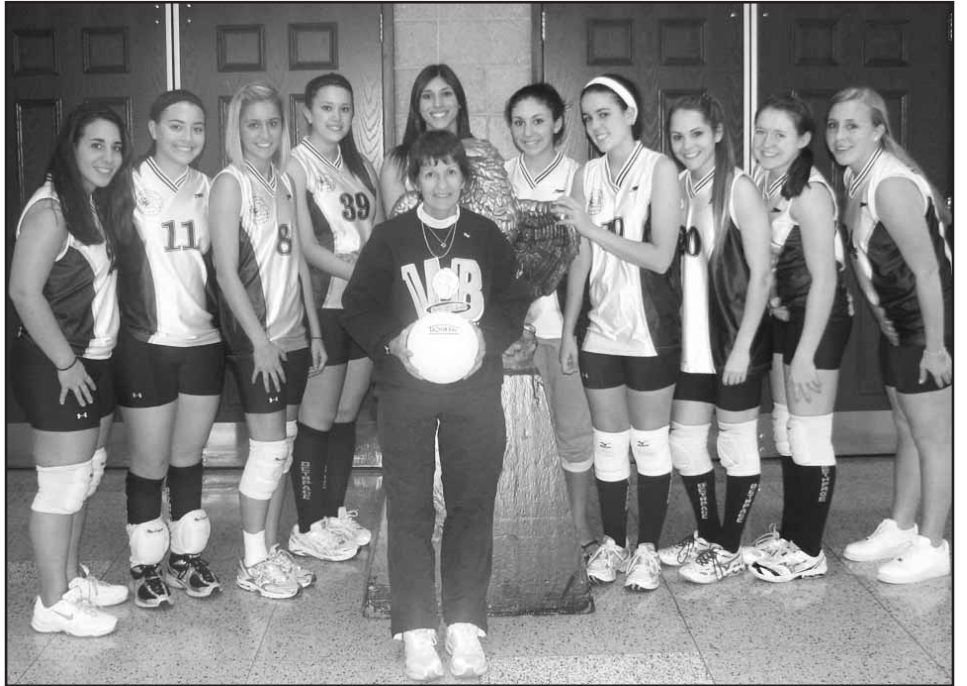
CORRECTION TO CONTINUING ED DATES

The fall continuing education brochure contained an incorrect starting date for spring adult education sessions. The spring classes will begin on Monday, February 22, 2010. The erroneous date was previously cited as February 1, 2010.

COACH DiPRIMA Reaches a Milestone

The Bethpage High School Girls Varsity Volleyball Team's 3-0 victory over Clarke High School in September marked more than another Golden Eagles triumph – it was a milestone for Coach Anne DiPrima, who reached the 500th win in her history of leading the team.

Coach DiPrima has taught Health and Physical Education at JFK Middle School for 39 years, and has coached the Girls Varsity Volleyball Team for the same span of time. During her career in Bethpage, she has also coached varsity softball, field hockey, and middle school-level volleyball, basketball, and softball. The District is pleased to congratulate Coach DiPrima on this accomplishment, which is the result of years of dedication and determination.



Coach Anne DiPrima and the Bethpage Girls Varsity Volleyball Team



TGIF@BHS

More than 250 High School students attended a TGIF@BHS night, which will likely develop into a recurring event after being so well received. Staff members coordinated games of basketball, ping-pong, and dodgeball, and the pool was open for swimming. Attendees also had a chance to watch the Yankee playoff game, which was broadcast live on the 16' auditorium screen. Students had a great time socializing and participating in activities of their choosing.

The program, supported by the PTA, Bethpage Congress of Teachers, and Bethpage Educational Foundation, is part of the District's ongoing effort to promote safe, healthy alternative activities for students.

Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics John Franchi organized the evening, assisted by Physical Education teacher Stephen Franzke, chaperones and volunteers Mr. Resnick, Mr. Maerz, Ms. McNamara, Ms. Loveland, Ms. Bertolotti, Mr. DeStefano, Mr. Granieri, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Hack, Mr. Neuman, Mrs. Mangano, and Mrs. Cotton. Lifeguards were also on-site to make the pool area safe for all.

The night ended with a raffle drawing for prizes including an iPod Touch, iTunes gift card, and restaurant gift certificates. Special thanks go out to Pappardelle's for providing pizzas. Everyone is looking forward to more TGIF@BHS events in the future!

BOARD OF EDUCATION