

# Educational Horizons

JUNE 2011

PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
www.pobschools.org

## Plainview-Old Bethpage Sixth Graders Earn Top Honors in National Science Competition



(L-R) Plainview-Old Bethpage Middle School Principal John McNamara and Toshiba representative Louis Marrone congratulate students Sophie Heiman, Alexandra Fryman, Thomas Venezia and Philip Danziger, and teacher Paula Engel.

The Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District is proud to announce that four POB Middle School sixth graders have won second place in the national level of the 2011 Toshiba ExploraVision Science Competition.

Thomas Venezia, Sophie Heiman, Alexandra Fryman and Philip Danziger, with the help of teacher/coach Paula Engel, entered the ExploraVision Competition after creating a prototype for a device they dubbed "BlindSight." The device, consisting of an HD nano-camera embedded in a contact lens, would send video and images to a microchip implanted in the brain of a sight-impaired person. The microchip would then process and store the visual data, allowing the blind person not only to "see," but also to remember the images perfectly.

The project was a top submission in the ExploraVision Competition, which encourages students to use their imaginations to create projects with technology that does not yet exist. Out of 4,800 teams to enter in the competition's fourth-through-sixth-grade division, only six, including the BlindSight team – were recognized as regional winners. The POB team's innovative device earned each student member, as well as the team coach, a \$5,000 savings bond and an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., where they were recognized as the second-place winners at a special awards ceremony. The students also participated in a Congressional Science Fair and Hearing hosted by the House Science and Technology Committee.

In order to create their proposal, the team performed extensive research, including conducting studies on specific areas of the brain and their functions, the different types of memory and the various causes of blindness. The team also researched recent breakthroughs in technology providing aid to the blind, including BrainPort – a device that translates information from a digital video camera to the tongue through gentle electrical stimulation.

Congratulations to the students, each a member of POB's gifted program – Project Challenge, and Ms. Engel on this very distinguished honor. For more information about the Toshiba ExploraVision Competition, visit <http://www.exploravision.org>.



**Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District**  
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# Superintendent's Message



Dear Community Residents,

As we come to the end of another school year, we inevitably look back to the progress made during the year and the challenges ahead. We have celebrated in this and in previous newsletters the accomplishments of our students. Our award ceremonies, moving-up ceremonies and graduation

mark the successes, but also point in the direction of future goals. Currently we are surveying the attitudes, thoughts and feelings of our students, staff and parents. We will use the results to choose a path to further growth and improvement.

Local school policies and practices are always deeply influenced by state and national requirements. We are working with a Dignity for All Students Committee to meet the requirements of a new law that requires us to focus on civility, citizenship and character education for all students. We know that schools that are successful in their academic work also provide safe and engaging learning environments. Students must know that school is a place in which they can find and develop their talents. This is not just the work of teachers, but it must involve all the adults that have contact with students, including all volunteers. It is a mission we share with the entire community.

On a national basis, we are asked to compare our outcomes with the best in the world. Global competition has challenged the United States to move in the direction of a national program of standards and a form of national assessment. As we prepare to meet these challenges, we have to be ready to abandon some of our favorite lessons and programs while steadfastly holding on to what is essential in learning. It will not be easy to find a consensus about what must be maintained while also identifying the innovations that must be sought.

Education has become a topic rich with controversy expressed in every form of media. Evaluation, tests and assessments, and common standards are the current issues. The debate is good, but we must be careful to avoid the stalemates of the past or we will get locked in arguments and never move forward. The educational outcomes for the children in our community matter, not to some citizens, but to all. Nationally and locally, we need to build common understandings about what matters and how we might achieve it together.

Sincerely,

Gerard W. Dempsey, Jr.  
Superintendent of Schools

## Thank You, Plainview-Old Bethpage!

On May 17, district residents came out to the polls and approved the 2011-12 school budget by a margin of 2,095 to 1,136. Proposition II, authorizing the expenditure of the capital reserve fund, passed by a margin of 2,230 to 936. Incumbents Debbie Bernstein and Ginger Lieberman were re-elected to the Board of Education. The Board will hold its annual reorganization meeting on Tuesday, July 5 at 7 p.m.

The Plainview-Old Bethpage School District is committed to providing an academically challenging and stimulating educational experience for all students, designed to meet their individual needs and prepare them to excel in a wide range of endeavors. At the same time, we are committed to fulfilling our responsibility to you, the taxpayers, by diligently controlling costs. Thanks to your support, the district is able to maintain its educational programs, sports teams, clubs and staff, even in these difficult economic times. By approving the capital reserve expenditure and combining it with the capital funds in the budget, community members have made it possible for the district to invest over \$5 million toward improvements through infrastructure and facility construction. We sincerely thank you for your continued support.

## Have You Checked Our Website?

The Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District website – [www.pobschools.org](http://www.pobschools.org) – provides links to a wealth of information about your child's school.

Among its many features are:

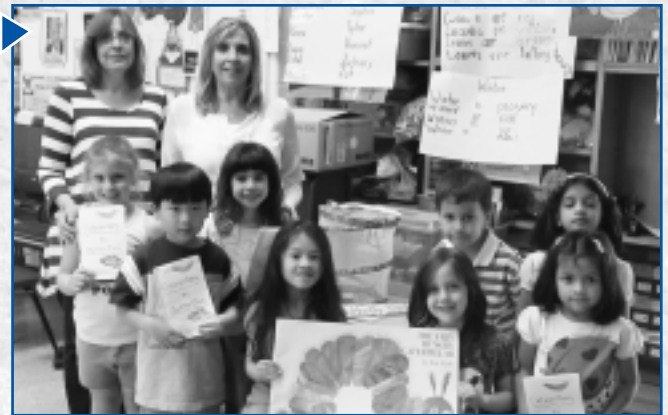
- Contact information for each building and central administration
- A copy of the district calendar and information on upcoming events
- Board meeting agendas
- Current and archived editions of our district newsletter
- A webpage for each school building
- Information about extracurricular activities
  - Lunch menus
  - School library information
  - Emergency school closing and delayed school opening information

...and much more. Don't forget to get the latest district news next time you're online!

# What's Happening...

## K-Center Students Enjoy a Fascinating Study in Biology

Children in Fran Ferrucci and Robbin Sigman's kindergarten classes recently explored the four stages of a butterfly's metamorphosis: egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (chrysalis) and adult (butterfly). By making critical observations of actual caterpillars, keeping a journal and reading children's literature on butterfly life, the students were able to learn and make predictions about the metamorphosis process. At the end of the study and transformation, the children released the newly formed butterflies into their natural habitat.



(L-R) Teacher's aide Paulette Oland and kindergarten teacher Fran Ferrucci, students Natalie Phillips, Nicholas Kang, Keara Madden, Mayah Asuncion, Reece Bennett, Nick Theocharidis, Faizah Akram and Isabela Espinoza



## Would You, Could You ... Celebrate Dr. Seuss Day at Old Bethpage Elementary School?

Old Bethpage Elementary School held its annual Dr. Seuss Celebration Day in March. Parents, members of the community, Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District staff and members of the Board of Education visited the school to read their favorite Dr. Seuss books to students. The guest presenters also discussed their careers and explained how important reading is in their daily lives. Students welcomed the visitors by dressing up as characters from *The Cat in a Hat* and reciting a Dr. Seuss poem.

## Parkway Second Graders Become Junior Entomologists

Parkway School's second graders were treated to an exciting program provided through the school's PTA. Through *Bug Bites*, presented by the Long Island Children's Museum, the children conducted research on insects and arachnids, learning about their anatomy, as well as their fascinating habits and traits. Students also had the opportunity to meet Sylvia and Henry, a pair of hissing cockroaches, and to observe them first-hand. After the presentation, the students used their knowledge about insect anatomy to create imaginary bugs out of modeling clay, as well as informative field guides. Long Island Children's Museum outreach programs for schools address New York State Learning Standards and meet district priorities in multiple curriculum areas.



(L-R) Jack Ecksel, second grade teacher Jodi Wilgard, Ziv Granov, Noah Kule and Jacob Bater

## *in Our Schools*

### **Pasadena's Got Talent!**

On May 6, Pasadena Elementary School hosted its 10th annual talent show. Held every year since the opening of the school, the talent show is coordinated by students and teachers, and includes singing, dancing and musical performances. Proceeds from raffle ticket sales during the event totaled approximately \$750, which was donated to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund. Thanks to all those who participated in this wonderful event, and a special thanks to Marian Patanjo, who has overseen the event since its inception.



### **No Empty Bowls Thanks to Stratford Road**

To help raise money for the hungry on Long Island, and to increase awareness of this problem, Stratford Road Elementary School hosted the Empty Bowl Fundraiser on April 27. Parents and community members participated in the event by eating soup, donated by 11 local restaurants, out of bowls handcrafted by Stratford Road students. Everyone who attended was asked to bring a bag of non-perishable food or make a cash donation to be given to Island Harvest, Long Island's largest food pantry. The students raised over \$600 and received enough food to fill two vans. Many thanks to fourth grade teacher and event coordinator Myra Brand; all of the student and staff volunteers; and the members of high school orchestra, who provided a wonderful performance during the evening.

### **Mattlin's Paper Cranes Help Our Japanese Friends**

Under the leadership of Kathleen Abbene and Ellen Lucas, students at Mattlin Middle School participated in the Paper Cranes for Japan campaign. Since the March 11 earthquake and resulting tsunami, Paper Cranes for Japan has helped the relief effort by encouraging students to construct and donate origami cranes. Once completed, the students' cranes are mailed out to the Bezos Family Foundation, which donates two dollars for each crane to the Architecture for Humanity's long-term redevelopment efforts in Japan. The accumulated cranes also represent the many wishes for Japan since, according to legend, 1,000 paper cranes equal one wish.



### **POBMS Young Authors and Illustrators**

Sixth grade students at Plainview-Old Bethpage Middle School participated in a workshop this year to become authors and illustrators. The students began by analyzing published children's books and brainstorming themes. During the workshop, they learned about writing techniques such as character change, movement through time, and plot points, and incorporated these techniques into their stories. After completing their books, students in Kim Krage's and Debbie Lovett's classes visited Pasadena and Stratford Road elementary schools to read and share their books with the fourth graders. The older students also gave the elementary students bookmarks and discussed the middle school transition.



# A Celebration of Music and the Arts



## POBJFKHS Students Featured in Long Island's Best Exhibit

Congratulations to the four POBJFKHS art students whose work was selected for this year's *Long Island's Best: Young Artists at the Heckscher Museum*. The exhibited student artwork was selected by art teachers throughout Suffolk and Nassau Counties – over 300 entries were received, and 78 were on display at the museum. The four POB students who exhibited work are:

**Adrian Kim**, *Honorable Mention* (pictured left)  
**Alexa Rosen • Cara Schrank • Sami Sheinwald**

## Holocaust Memorial Center Honors POB Students

Congratulations to the three POBJFKHS students who earned recognition at the annual Literature, Art, Music and Multi-Media competitions sponsored by the Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center of Nassau County. Stefanie Mosenson took first place in the multi-media/still category; Nidhi Mann and Ryan Ferreira each earned an honorable mention: Nidhi in the category of prose, Ryan in the category of multi-media/still. The theme of this year's competition was "Upstanders" – people willing to put themselves at risk to help others in difficult circumstances, simply because it is the right thing to do. Students were challenged to create original works about rescuers who have influenced them to help make the world a better place. Plainview–Old Bethpage School District's participation in this annual competition underscores to our students the importance of applying knowledge and understanding for the good of our local and global communities.



## Additional Art Awards

- POBJFKHS students Alex Friedlander and Christopher Arena were chosen as finalists for the Peter Terian Fine Arts Scholarship. The two seniors were chosen from 168 applicants and made it to the final group of 24.
- Student Mac Guttenberg won Honorable Mention at the Huntington Camera Club's 21st Annual High School Competition. Since its inception, the competition has grown and regularly receives up to 800 submissions annually. This year, there were 19 winning images.
- Two POB students won first place at the Photographic Federation of Long Island's 2nd Annual High School Photo Competition. David Walker won in the Land/Seascape category, and Rachel Kimmel won in the Photojournalism category.
- POBJFKHS students also exhibited their work at the High Arts Showcase VII at the Art-trium Gallery in Melville. The Huntington Arts Council hosts the annual showcase, which features media projects from top high school artists.



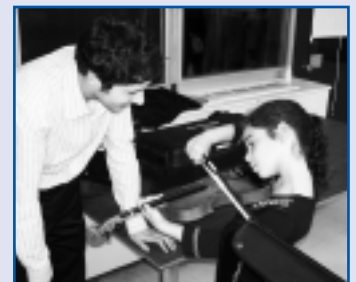
## Summer Visions of Greatness for POB Senior Elizabeth Oh

The North Shore Symphony Orchestra (NSSO), currently celebrating its 50th anniversary, presented the Summer Visions Concert on June 11 at POBJFKHS. The concert featured pianist Elizabeth Oh, winner of the 2011 NSSO Young Artists Award Competition. Ms. Oh, a senior at POBJFKHS and current scholarship student at the Manhattan School of Music Precollege, performed Chopin's "Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor," accompanied by the NSSO.

Elizabeth Oh

## Musical Instrument Petting Zoo

Earlier this year, the Music Association of Plainview–Old Bethpage (MAPOB) hosted a Music Instrument Petting Zoo at Mattlin Middle School for the district's third grade students. JFK Tri-M Music Honor Society students demonstrated the different instruments offered for study in the POB music program. The younger students had the opportunity to ask questions and sample the tuba, trumpet, saxophone and flute, among many other instruments. The event was well attended by many enthusiastic students and parents. Special thanks to MAPOB President Susan Naftol and Tri-M Coordinator Glenn Rubin for organizing this event.



# ATHLETICS

## Hawks Excel, On and Off the Field

The Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District has a long and distinguished history of both academic and athletic excellence, and our students have proudly carried on that tradition throughout the 2010-11 school year. We are pleased to announce that six of our winter varsity sports teams and five of our spring varsity teams have been named Scholar/Athlete Teams by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA). Scholar/Athlete Teams are recognized as such when they maintain an academic average of at least 90 percent during their sport season. The following teams exceeded that requirement:

Winter 2010-11 Teams	GPA	Spring 2010-11 Teams	GPA
Boys' Winter Track	94.40	Boys' Spring Track	94.40
Girls' Winter Track	95.60	Girls' Spring Track	96.79
Boys' Bowling	91.45	Girls' Lacrosse	91.84
Girls' Bowling	90.06	Baseball	91.71
Gymnastics	91.28	Boys' Tennis	90.92
Boys' Swimming	94.24		

**Congratulations to all our talented student-athletes for a job well done!**

## Winners & Achievers



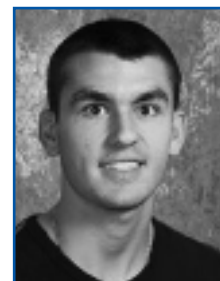
### Spanish Poetry Contest Winner

Congratulations to Michelle Olakkengil, who won second place in the Spanish Poetry Contest at Hofstra University this year. Approximately 160 students from Nassau and Suffolk Counties competed in levels 1 through 5 by reciting classic poems, or poems of their own creation, in Spanish. Students were judged according to their pronunciation, intonation (rhythm and timing), poise and interpretation (body language and gestures). Michelle placed second in the level 3 competition for her recitation of "Donde Habita el Olvido" by Luis Cernuda.

(L-R) Michelle Olakkengil and POBJFKHS foreign language teacher Dorothy Kleinman

### Student Awarded for Volunteer Service

Plainview-Old Bethpage senior Matthew Friedrich was recently honored for his exemplary volunteer service with a state-level Certificate of Excellence from the 2011 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards Program. Matthew earned this recognition after creating pink paper ribbons that were sold in local schools and businesses to raise funds for The Breast Cancer Research Foundation. Presented annually by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP), the Spirit of Community Award honors young people across America for outstanding community service activities.



Matthew Friedrich



### Google Science Fair Semifinalists

Congratulations to POBJFKHS sophomores Amelia Ricketts, Willa Sieradski and Jennifer Wang, whose independent research project achieved semifinalist status in the 2011 Google Science Fair. Under the direction of science teacher Nicholas DeMaria, the team submitted its entry, *JAW: Thermal Envelope Efficiency Project*, featuring a device that uses an infrared thermometer to analyze ways of reducing home energy usage. Out of over 7,500 entries from more than 90 countries around the world, the POB team's project was one of 60 selected for the semifinals. Way to go, team!

(L-R) POBJFKHS Principal James Murray, science teacher Nicholas DeMaria, students Willa Sieradski; Jennifer Wang and Amelia Ricketts, Chairperson of Science Joyce Barry