High School Happenings...

CPHS Student Selected for All Bergen County Chorus

Cliffside Park Senior, Jinwoo Ahn, has successfully auditioned for the “All-Bergen County Chorus” as a First Tenor. He is the first CPHS student to be accepted into this prestigious ensemble in the past twenty years. The “All-Bergen County Chorus” is comprised of the best singers from every Bergen County high school and is operated by the Music Educators of Bergen County, Inc. (MEBCI). This organization is a collaborative teacher-run organization. Jinwoo Ahn will now perform at a concert with the other successful applicants on January 15th at Westwood High School. “I didn’t think I would get in,” Ahn admits. “I was hoping; but when I heard that I got in, I was shocked and excited!” Three other CPHS students practiced continuously and auditioned for the ensemble as well, but were unsuccessful this time around. They included junior-Katrina Ramos, junior-Pracheeta Dhawan, and sophomore-Lauren Alderete. On November 29th, four instrumentalists also auditioned for the “All-Bergen County Band.” They are senior-Corinne Reilly on the flute, junior-Ishiaque Rahman on percussion, sophomore-Arif Khalil on the clarinet and sophomore-Lauren Alderete on the bass clarinet. Unfortunately, none of them were successful, but they learned a great deal from the experience. “It’s really shocking to see the insane amount of competition the other schools bring,” says Arif Khalil. “The competition has enhanced my playing abilities, but having the privilege to see other musicians, my own age, was truly a memorable experience.”

World Language Graduate Prepares to Give Back

Yeri Lopez, an CPHS alumnus of the Class of ’07 has finished a very successful student teaching experience in the World Language Department. He will be certified in Spanish and Italian as of December 16, 2011. It is anticipated that he will represent CPHS as a highly qualified and successful future teacher. Yeri will be in good company as Cliffside Park has many impressive residents. In fact, on November 16, Agatino Accardi, Jan Bedula, and Yeri Lopez met with a Cliffside Park resident Filomena Veltri, author of a beginning level Italian text and workbook, who is also an Italian teacher at UNIS (United Nations International School). Ms. Veltri talked to CPHS staff members about her work at the United Nations School and provided a preview of her text and workbook.

Math Team Grows To Record Participation

The CPHS Math Team has expanded to 47 students—which is the highest level of participation in the ten years that Ms. Fucci has been the advisor for the club. The Math Team is open to all students and offers fun competition among our students and against other students across New Jersey. Each student must answer 6 questions on topics ranging from Algebra to Geometry to Advanced Algebra. The level of difficulty of the questions increases over the course of the school year. Students enjoy many benefits as a result of participation. For example, they gain experience working through a set of problems in a limited amount of time. Another benefit is the obvious improvement in a student’s confidence level as his or her skills increase. As with any other team in a district, there is no doubt that Math Team students practice and perform at the highest levels against their peers on competing teams.
**Project First Robotics Expands to Two Teams**

CPHS has two teams competing in this year's FIRST Robotics FTC Challenge. The teams have been building, designing, and programming their robots. This year, the challenge requires the robots to pick up racket balls and place them in crates. For bonus points, the robots must lift and stack the crates after they've been filled with racket balls. Each CPHS team meets twice weekly in the high school and occasionally on Saturday. The teams are preparing for a competition at Livingston High School on December 17th. Come out and support us!

**Red Raiders Fall Sports Round-up**

Mr. Lombardo was extremely proud of the fall sports team members, who wore pink shirts, pink tape, pink socks and used pink soccer balls in order to raise close to $1,000 for Breast Cancer research. This effort was spearheaded by Coach, Jim Fucci, whose mother is a breast cancer survivor. CPHS’s Cheerleaders also cheered and walked in a Juvenile Diabetes Walk in Franklin Lakes to help raise money and awareness for this serious issue. Mr. Lombardo offers his thanks to Coach Lofaro and the Cheerleading Squad and congratulates all athletes and fans for their outstanding sportsmanship throughout the year. Please join us in recognizing these outstanding accomplishments:

**All League selections for Fall season**

**Cross Country All League**
1st Team: Shannen Gallardo-JR
Honorable Mention: Rosemary Ventura-JR, Aly Fuentes-SO

**Boys Soccer**
Honorable Mention: Gramoz Paposhi-SO

First Team All Bergen County: Hykuab Ryakes
Second Team All Bergen County: Omar Ventura

(SR=Senior, JR=Junior, SO=Sophomore, FR=Freshman)

**Girls Soccer**
1st Team : Samaria McCullough -JR, Syria McCullough-SO
2nd Team: Natalie Saylanar-SR, Maria Villada-SR, Taylor Giancovo-SR
Honorable Mention: Celeste Leon –Fr

**Girls Tennis**
1st team: Andrea Altamirano –JR, Jusine Han -SO, Grace Kang-SO
Honorable Mention: Vivian Zhang –JR

**Volleyball**
1st Team: Elena Rapp –SR,
2nd Team: Tina Scala-SR
Honorable Mention: Rafaela Dos Santos -SR

**Football**
All league
1st Team: Jonathan Schmitt-SR, Jordan Gil -JR
Honorable Mention: Andi Hernandez-SR, Shane Carter -JR

Congratulations to Tina Scala, Senior Volleyball player, for being named first-ever Time Warner Cable Sportstime Student Athlete of the Month.
Writing Lesson Connects Students “The Old Fashioned Way”

Twitter and texting have enabled students to utilize short cuts to communicate. However, CPHS English teacher, Elizabeth Mueller, knows the importance of developing letter writing skills, especially when students will need these skills to seek employment. Therefore, Ms. Mueller jumped at an interesting opportunity when, in October, her department head, Corless Royer, came to her with a letter from a high school English teacher in Fon Du Lac, Wisconsin. The Wisconsin teacher introduced herself, in the letter, and provided details about a new pen pal program designed to connect students from different parts of the country through letter writing. Attached to her letter was a letter from a freshman student at Fon Du Lac High School. In it, the student wrote about her likes and dislikes, her family life, her school life, and asked questions about life in Cliffside Park. Ms. Mueller decided that it would be a fun and interesting activity to try, so she presented the Pen Pal idea to one of her 9th grade classes. They were very excited. She selected one of her student’s names out of a hat, and he was assigned to write the first CPHS student letter. The rest of the class also wrote letters of introduction to other students in the Fon Du Lac class. No last names were used, and Ms. Mueller is keeping it limited to strictly letter writing— to prevent students from using Facebook or Twitter. Not only is “old fashioned” letter writing fun, but students are developing essential communications skills.

Ms. Mueller mailed all of the letters in November and students are anxiously awaiting their replies.

CPHS Fall Production Features Dracula and Cinderella

The CPHS fall production of The Shadow of Dracula and The Story of Cinderella...Sort Of were performed on November 17 & 18th. The Story of Cinderella and The Shadow of Dracula are one-act plays that were drastically edited and revised by the students who attended the Summer Theatre Workshop at the Cliffside Park Middle School, during the summers of 2005 and 2006. The plays were directed by Leslie Auslin, along with Tracey Rembecky as Technical / Stage Design Director and Andrea Romano as Assistant Director. The cast was lead by seniors Natalie Montas, Angelica Santos, Brianna Skrivanic, Susan Lobo and Amanda Koonce. The lead role of Dracula was played by Anthony Amalfi and Natalie Montas portrayed Cinderella. Ms. Auslin extends her gratitude to Mr. Romagnino and the Board of Education and to all of the drama students who baked for bake sales and gave their time for fundraising events.

The cast included:

Natalie Montas
Angelica Santos
Brianna Skrivanic
Matthew Owitz
Anthony Amalfi
Amanda Koonce
Ana Luiza
Mauadie Cardosa
Dakota Gibbons
Nina Kharoufeh
Arif Khalil – Arturo Fernandez
Shakira Perez- Cicily
Katrina Ramos
Gisnelly Perez – Diamant Gjonbalaj
Allie Jones

Does your Child Need Assistance?

Some children are born with or develop conditions that delay normal growth. Professional guidance and free special education programs are available to assist all children. Services are available for special children ages 3 to 21. They are staffed by caring professionals, geared to help meet each child’s needs, and designed to involve the family. Don’t wait—Call the Cliffside Park Child Study Team today!

For more information, please call 201-313-2320.
Students Come to Aid of Pets Displaced by the Economy

In December, Mrs. O’Connor’s ESL class in School 6 Middle School organized a bake sale to benefit the Bergen County Animal Shelter and local animal rescue groups. The Bergen Record and The Humane Society’s children’s newspaper “KIND News” featured articles about the tremendous increase in pet surrender to shelters, due to foreclosures and pet owner rates of job loss. After reading about the economy’s devastating effect on families and their pets, the children wanted to do something. They decided to conduct a bake sale. The project had wonderful educational implications. Because many of the students were beginners in using English, they were nervous about making morning announcements to advertise the sale. However, by the end of the week, they were all eager to speak into the microphone. Throughout the sale, students learned about the importance of advertising, as well as the business concepts of supply and demand. Over the course of a two-day bake sale, the children raised $250 for the homeless animals!

Mrs. O’Conner thanks Mrs. Giancola for being extremely supportive while helping to make the sale a success!

After School Program Continues to Expand

After School Program Coordinator, Linda Ludwikowski, reports that the After School Program is more popular than ever and currently serves over 225 students. After School Program activities are offered in each school on a daily basis immediately following the school day. Each day, the program begins with an hour of homework help, followed by an hour of enrichment activities, and then an hour of recreation. Students have the opportunity to select from a wide selection of unique activities that are all designed to supplement the day school curriculum. Enrichment offerings currently available include: Sign Language, Intro to Italian, Intro to Spanish, Yoga, Jujitsu, Origami, Fantasy Football, Cooking, Sewing, Dance, Pilates, Lego Mania, Book Club, Chess, Reader’s Theatre, and many more. Activity schedules are posted on the school district’s website at www.cliffsidepark.edu. According to Mrs. Ludwikowski, “We now have sixteen classes running every day and still we have approximately fifty students on the waiting list due to high demand. We are fortunate to have a strong partnership with Jewish Family Service. Together, we have established a program that is self-sustaining and offers an outstanding service to families in our community.”

On behalf of the Cliffside Park Board of Education,
Mr. Romagnino wishes you and your family a Happy and Healthy New Year! Thank you for your partnership on behalf of the children of Cliffside Park!
Not everyone can be “Home for the Holidays, so fourth grade students decorated holiday stockings and wrote messages to troops stationed in Afghanistan. Special thanks to the students in Mrs. Danno's, Mrs. Kosinski's and Mrs. Carden's classes.

“SHHH! Our Bulbs Are Sleeping. We Must Wait For Spring.”

Spring seems far away in December but, never the less, students from School #6 are looking forward to its arrival. Mrs. Pirretti's and Ms. Briscione's classes participated in an enrichment lesson about Daffodil bulbs with district enrichment teacher, Mrs. Luderer. Two hundred Daffodil bulbs were donated by Mr. Jan Doornbosch from International Bulb in Montvale. The bulbs were planted in the front of School #6.

Sixth grade students in Mrs. Luderer's Search classes donated $250 to the newly renovated Cliffside Park Library Children's Room. The students participated in The Stock Market Game during the school year, and as a culminating activity, the students created a toy business. They stocked the shelves purchasing items from catalogues, and selling them to students in School #6 and School #4.

The sixth graders at Cliffside Park School #3 hosted a Halloween Carnival on October 31, 2011 for the little tykes of the school. The 6th graders created a variety of homemade games, such as pumpkin bowling, pin the nose on the Jack-o-Lantern, and Humpty Dumpty Skeleton. Many of the games were made from items that were "recycled" from the school or student homes. There were almost twenty different games for the Kindergarten, first and second graders to play. The sixth graders also donated prizes including candy, temporary tattoos, and decorated pencils.

Cliffside Park School #3 PTO held it's first Monthly Movie Matinee. The PTO has traditionally held evening Movie & Game Nights. However, to get even more students interested in the event and to encourage younger students to attend, the PTO decided to host an event directly after school—hence the "Movie Matinee." The first month's movie was Spooky Buddies, which was an appropriate movie for the month of October. The PTO treated students to ice cream sundaes and the movie. Over eighty students attended the event, which is three times the number that usually attends the evening movie event! Besides parent volunteers, the sixth graders were “ushered” into service to ensure the event ran smoothly.

The mission of the Cliffside Park School District is to provide a safe, academically focused environment within our culturally diverse community where all students have the opportunity to achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards at all grade levels. We will challenge each student to confidently achieve his or her educational and personal goals as well as acquire the work and social skills essential to become a productive member of society.
The third and fourth graders of Cliffside Park School #3 were treated to an assembly by Laurie Russo of the Bergen County Utilities Authority. Ms. Russo taught the students the importance of recycling and "how to" recycle properly. She also emphasized the importance of reducing garbage by recycling inside your own house. She showed how simple household "garbage" could be reused for items such as art projects. She also provided the teachers with a "tub" of lesson plans that they can use to help further the students' understanding of recycling.

School # 3 second graders posed with Greg and Frank of the Cliffside Park Fire Department and their friend "Firefighter Phil." Kindergarten, first and second graders enjoyed this important assembly during National Fire Prevention Month in October. The program teaches children essential fire prevention and safety information in a "child friendly" way by using puppets. The students had a great time. Thank you to Greg, Frank, and Firefighter Phil for their service.

School # 6 sixth graders performed "good deeds" for Veterans Day. The students donated boxes of Oreo cookies and over 55 pounds of candy to create a care package for Army Specialist, Eduardo Montano, who is part of a civil affairs unit in Afghanistan. He just finished building a school for a local Afghan community. The sixth grade students are hoping to collect pens, crayons and other school supplies for the brand new Afghan school this December. The students also sent "E-cards" to soldiers and hospitalized veterans through two online programs. The first program, operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs, allowed students to send E-cards to wounded soldiers. The second program, from Heinz Ketchup, allowed students to send an E-card to a soldier and then Heinz Ketchup committed to making a donation for each card through the Wounded Warrior Project.

An Anti-Bullying Assembly was presented at Cliffside Park School #3 by ReachOUT and the Viibe Dance Studio, which are operated by Lori Michaels. The 45-minute performance was presented twice during the day for students in grades K-2 and then for students in grades 3-6. The Viibe Dancers are highly recognized and have performed for many venues including the Shake It Up Show on The Disney Channel. The assembly started with the Viibe dancers performing energizing routines. Then, Lori spoke about the importance of not bullying and of NOT being a bystander. She emphasized that you need to work as a member of a team to accomplish great things. Her dancers demonstrated this concept with several amazing performances. The finale had the students (and Principal Brunelli) up and learning a few new dance moves. The kids loved it and it really held their attention.

“If you see bullying, don’t be a bystander!”
We need to work as a team to accomplish great things.”
Lori Michaels of ReachOUT and Viibe Dance Studio
Mrs. Castiblanco's first grade class and Mrs. Roussos's third grade class at School # 5 wrapped-up their first writing unit with a Publisher's Celebration. Students worked diligently to complete the *How Writer's Work* Unit, from immersion with different authors and texts, to generating their very own ideas to write about. Throughout the writing process, students learned every aspect of becoming a published author and illustrator. Students wrote drafts, edited their writing, checked with peers for revisions, drew illustrations, and wrote a final published copy. It was amazing to see the look of accomplishment on their faces when they finally held the finished product in their hands. There was no better way to end the unit than with a Publisher's Celebration. Grades one and three came together to celebrate their accomplishments and shared their hard work with one another. Every student received a published author certificate, along with a pencil and eraser, to add to their writer's toolbox. Students are eagerly awaiting the start of the next writing unit to once again become published authors!

During November, the teachers and staff of the Cliffside Park Education Association hosted a food drive to support our local food banks. Many families depend on local food banks to get by during these difficult financial times. CPEA Members are grateful to all who contributed to this worthy cause.

The New Jersey Department of Health & Senior Services requires children enrolled in childcare, pre-school, or pre-kindergarten to have one dose of influenza vaccine between September 1st and December 31st of each year. Students entering school after December 31st and up until March 31st must receive one dose because it’s still flu season during this time period. To make this flu shot experience somewhat positive, and to reinforce the importance of receiving the shot, Mrs. Bracco’s pre-kindergarten class pretended to give free flu shots. The focus of the lesson was to emphasize how shots keep young children from getting sick and to illustrate that, in this class, shots don’t hurt!

Despite the cold, students attending School # 4 are continuing to “WALK THE WALK.” This is a campaign created by parent, Meredith Ansell, with the support of Principal, Janet Merrill. The campaign started with the parking situation and the daily parent “drop-off” of students. The solution was to encourage more students to walk to school. The campaign hopes to accomplish the reduction of traffic and congestion around the school. Student wellness is also a strong motivating factor. Walking is a healthy way to start the day and for parents, the walk is also a chance to spend quality time with their children. WALK THE WALK can also be incorporated into learning. Children can write or draw what they saw or learned on their way to school. A competition, among classes, began this fall and is going strong. The class that has the most children, who walked to school for the most days, will win a pizza or ice-cream party. The first ice-cream parties have already been awarded to three classes due to a three-way tie. This does not mean the campaign is over! The parties are motivational tools to inspire more participants. The winning classes, to date, included Ms. Macellaro's First Grade class, Mr. Vicchio's Third Grade class and Mrs. Danno's Fourth Grade class. If you see a group of young students walking with parents, offer a wave or smile, to acknowledge that they are part of a campaign that encourages good health and so much more!