



COPIAGUE. Connections

Summer 2012

COPIAGUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS - A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

In this Issue...



Retired & Tenured
pg. 2



Celebrating Class Day
pg. 3



...Class of 2012!
pg. 4-5



Artists on Display
pg. 6



Fun Filled-Days
pg. 7

Class of 2012 *Spreads Their Wings*

On Friday, June 22, the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Class of 2012 were celebrated by members of the Board of Education, administration, family, friends, faculty, and invited guests as they officially completed their educational journey through the Copiague School District.

During the ceremony, students were treated to words of advice and wisdom from Board of Education President Michael Greb, Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig, High School Principal Jeanette Altruda, Valedictorian Jessica Murphy, Salutatorian Laury Gomez-Pena, and Senior Class President Sarah Jordan. Sarah also presented the class gift to the school – a memorial stone “in honor of our friend and classmate Christopher Urban.”

Taking a cue from their yearbook theme *Spreading Our Wings and Taking Flight*, Mrs. Altruda remarked in her address to the class, “As we send you off and stand by as you take flight, I ask you to remember always where you came from and stay focused on where you are going.” Continuing, she stated, “Live a life driven by goals that define you as a person, that honor your family and



community, and that create a pathway for you to follow in becoming a successful and happy adult. As you begin to soar through the years of your life, commit to following this path. As with any journey, there will be obstacles to overcome and situations to navigate. Allow those who love you to be the wind under your wings and guide you back to your path.”

In her last remarks to her fellow classmates, Jessica continued the yearbook theme and urged the class, “Continue breaking the norms and be your own person. Individuality sparks that light within your soul. Go out in this big world and show yourself.”

Following the presentation of diplomas and the turning of their tassels, the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Class of 2012 were ready to spread their wings and make their mark on the world.



Copiague School District
Copiague, N.Y. 11726

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Resident
Copiague School District

A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Residents,

I hope this summer edition of Capiague Connections finds you enjoying a relaxing summer. We have just completed a very busy and productive year, with many great accomplishments by our students and staff.

Once again this year Capiague students continued their upward trend in academic achievement. We also saw increased student participation in clubs, other co-curricular activities, the arts and sports. With the support of the Board of Education and community, our school district has been able to continue its steady annual trend of academic improvement and provide the necessary stability for children that these challenging times require. At our annual School Budget Vote, our residents showed their confidence once again in our schools by overwhelmingly approving our School Budget with the largest margin (70%) yet. As with previous budgets, the Board of Education and Administration struck the necessary balance between maintaining important programs for children and the interests of our taxpayers.

This newsletter features but a few of the many activities and accomplishments of our students and staff during the spring months of our past school year. After taking a few minutes to review this newsletter, I believe you will agree that we have great kids in our community and that Capiague continues to be a "great place to live and learn."

One noteworthy feature you will be reading about is the recent approval by the New York State Board of Regents of our application to create two K-5 schools under one roof at Deauville Gardens, a change that we are certain will create improved educational opportunities and convenience for the children and families of Deauville Gardens. Additionally, these two smaller K-5 schools will also provide increased flexibility and opportunities that will allow our teaching and administrative staff to better meet the challenges that lie ahead with respect to the new Common Core Standards, APPR and overall accountability. The two schools, Deauville Gardens West Elementary School (wing closest to Deauville Blvd.) and Deauville Gardens East Elementary School (wing closest to Waldo St.) will each have their own schedule, whereby families with siblings in both primary and intermediate grades will now be able to attend school on the same schedule.

On a related note, the Great Neck Road Elementary School will also be moving to a single schedule for the 2012-13 school year - 9:05am - 3:15 pm - which will also increase convenience for families and, as a result of the reduction of some buses that will no longer be needed, reap some substantial financial savings moving forward.

I hope you enjoy the remainder of your summer and I look forward to joining with you this fall in working to make our schools the best they can be for our children.

See you in September!

Sincerely,



Charles A. Leunig
Superintendent of Schools

RETIRED & TENURED



Each June signifies the closing of the door on another school year, but it also marks a series of beginnings. This year, new beginnings are at hand for the 12 retiring staff members and 13 educators who received tenure during a special reception held prior to the Capiague School District Board of Education meeting of June 4.

"Tonight, we are fortunate to celebrate two special occasions in one's educational career: the retirement of many of our dedicated staff and the granting of tenure of some of our brightest young educators," remarked Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig to begin the program.

The Board of Education and administration extend their best wishes to the retiring and tenured staff of the Capiague School District:

RETIREES

- Vivian Alba – Deauville Gardens Cook Manager, 17 years
- Joann Anderson – High School Clerk Typist, 32 years
- Benjamin Bonaventura – Middle School Assistant Principal, 26 years
- Daiva Bienkowski – Susan E. Wiley ESL Teacher, 15 years
- Virginia Colletti – High School Food Service Worker, 25 years
- Jeanette Hubbard – Middle School Senior Stenographer, 30 years
- Alice Jankowski – Middle School Science Teacher, 25 years
- Camille McGrath – Deauville Gardens Clerk Typist, 25 years
- Collette McNerney – High School Senior Clerk Typist, 16 years
- Chris Sayevich, Middle School Clerk Typist, 32 years
- Rita Soukup – Central Office Principal Stenographer, 31 years
- John Wevers – High School Music Teacher, 28 years
- Jean Zentil – High School Senior Clerk Typist, 27 years

TENURED

- Peter Michaelson – Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
- Michelle Budion – Coordinator of English Language Learners
- Renee Locker – Chairperson of Science
- Jennifer Pierre-Louis – Coordinator of Fine Arts
- Allison Barone – Middle School Science Teacher
- Cristina DaCosta – Deauville Gardens Psychologist
- Jacquelin Espinal – High School Foreign Language Teacher
- Damin Gomes – High School Art Teacher
- Jaclyn Grossman – Deauville Gardens Elementary Teacher
- Christine Montemaggiore – High School Math Teacher
- Marisa Perlongo – Middle School Health Teacher
- Yvonne Pino – Deauville Gardens Bilingual Elementary Teacher
- Francesca Spinelli – Middle School Guidance Counselor



SAFE AND SECURE

At the May 21 Board of Education meeting, ADT Commercial Security presented their findings following a safety and security assessment. Over the course of their assessment, ADT reviewed districtwide and building-level emergency response plans, identified potential hazards and risk from regional and community areas surrounding school properties, provided a physical evaluation of structures and grounds, and established best practices for the district.

Following their recommendations to the Board and administration, Commercial Account Executive of ADT Louis Farley noted, "The bottom line is that the Capiague School District is ahead of the curve in school security and safety awareness."



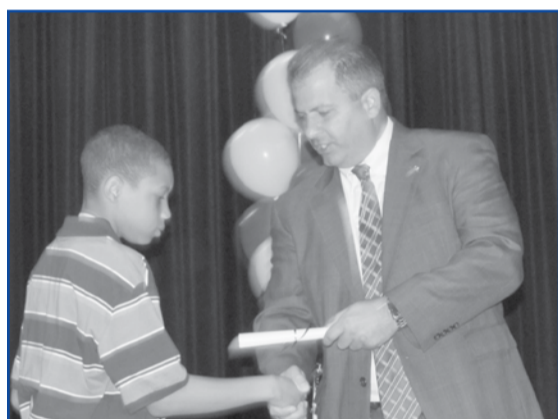
Celebrating Class Day

It was pomp, circumstance, and celebration as more than 380 Copiague fifth-graders officially completed their elementary years by participating in Class Day moving-up ceremonies. During the ceremonies, the fifth-grade students from Deauville Gardens, Great Neck Road, and Susan E. Wiley showcased their musical talents during special performances and were honored for their academic achievements, as the President's Awards for Educational Excellence and Educational Improvement were presented.

During his address to the students at Great Neck Road and Susan E. Wiley, Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig remarked, "This is truly a time of celebration and reflection on the friendships and connections you've made. All of us in this room are very proud of you and your many successes. Like the fifth-graders before you, you continue to set the academic standard for those fifth-graders who will come after you. I have every expectation that you will continue these successes at the Copiague Middle

School." Continuing, he wished the students well and encouraged them to become involved when they enter the middle school. "There is a whole new world waiting for you. Take advantage of all of the opportunities afforded to you – join a club, participate in the school musical, play a sport."

Following the presentation of diplomas, the newly appointed elementary school graduates gathered with parents, family members, and friends to rejoice in their accomplishments and prepare for their move up to the middle school.



MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

MOVE UP

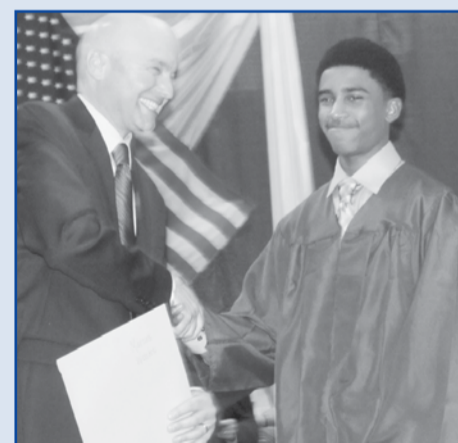
The warm evening could not put a damper on the celebration as more than 400 eighth-graders from Copiague Middle School were recognized during an official moving-up ceremony. Held on June 21 in the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School gymnasium, the students were led into ceremony by their guidance counselors amid applause and cheers from members of the Board of Education, administration, family, and friends.

During the evening, the students were treated to speeches filled with pride, congratulations, and words of wisdom from Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig, Principal Andrew Lagnado, Valedictorian Dawn Gioia, and Salutatorian Karla Lopez. During his address, Mr. Leunig congratulated the students and their parents on the achievements the class had attained and discussed the various opportunities afforded to the students once they enter high school. "I urge you to take advantage of the

opportunities available, break out of your comfort zone, and challenge yourselves," he advised. "The bar has been set high."

Continuing with similar advice, Mr. Lagnado remarked, "As you enter this next phase of your educational and adolescent lives, be sure to remember to stay involved in all of the positive things that are offered at the high school. There are so many wonderful academic and extracurricular opportunities for you to take advantage of. Stay motivated, focused, and goal-oriented. These next few years will lay the groundwork for your futures, so remember that the decisions you make will certainly impact your futures."

As the ceremony concluded, the eighth-graders gathered together with friends and families to document the joyous occasion with photos and individual celebrations.



Congratulations C

Spotlight on the Class of 2012

- 317 Graduates
- 4 Graduates Entering the Military
- 171 Graduating with a Regents Diploma
- 83 Graduating with an Advanced Regents Diploma
- 12 Graduating with an Advanced Regents Diploma with Honors

Following years of hard work, 71 percent of the Class of 2012 will be continuing their education at a college or university this fall. Below is just a sample of the colleges where Copiague graduates will proudly represent their community:

American University
Art Institute of New York City
Defiance College
Delaware State University
East Stroudsburg University
Fashion Institute of Technology
Florida A&M
Hofstra University
Howard University
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Loyola University
New York University
Norfolk State University
Quinnipiac University
St. John's University
SUNY Albany
SUNY Binghamton
SUNY Stony Brook
University of Hawaii
University of the Sciences
Virginia State University



Class of 2012!

Class of 12!



Seniors Honored at Awards Night

On Thursday, June 7, 122 members of the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Class of 2012 were recognized for their accomplishments throughout their high school careers. During the annual Senior Awards Night, members of the Board of Education, administration,

staff and parent associations, and community organizations gathered in the high school auditorium to acknowledge the students who have earned high marks in the classroom, on the athletic field, for community service, and for their musical, theatrical, and artistic abilities.

The night began as Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig, on behalf of the entire Board of Education and administration, congratulated the students and their families on this impressive accomplishment and wished the students continued success in their future endeavors. During the community-sponsored awards and scholarships portion of the program, more than \$56,000 in local scholarships were awarded. In addition, Town of Babylon Supervisor Richard Schaffer presented senior Joseph Brennan with the TOB Community Proclamation Award, announcing that June 7, 2012 was officially Joseph Brennan Day in the Town of Babylon.



TRACK STARS SPRINT to Higher Education

Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School track stars and graduating seniors Michael Benson and Janel Francis will both continue their education and track careers at the collegiate level this fall.

During his years on the cross-country and winter and spring track teams, Michael has collected numerous accolades. He placed first in the 400 intermediate hurdles in the Division II Championships and second in the 110 high hurdles. He has also been a member of the winning 4x400 team at the Penn Relays and placed sixth at the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Championships in both the 55 and 110 high hurdles.

Michael will attend The College of Saint Rose in the fall.

"Michael has been a tremendous pleasure to work with...if he couldn't beat his opponents with talent, he'd beat them with work ethic," stated his coach, George W. Schroeder.

Janel is undefeated in league play for the past three years. She holds the long jump record (19'4") at St. Anthony's Invitational, has won first-place awards in the Glenn D. Loucks Meet long jump and triple jump, and is the New York Relays first-place winner/record holder in long jump. Janel is ranked 16th in the nation and second in New York State with a personal record, jumping 19'7-1/4". She will attend the University of Richmond this fall.

"Janel has accomplished many great feats over her four-year run," said her coach, Toni Spencer, of the All-Long Island senior. "Her determination and hard work are not just realized on the track, as she is a two-time All-County, All-Academic recipient and has qualified for the Scholar-Athlete Award each year since the ninth grade."





Artists on Display

Every year for the past 16 years, the Copiague School District has honored student-artists by selecting art pieces to hang on the walls throughout the school buildings and central administration offices as part of the Superintendent's Art Gallery. Students selected to have their artwork featured in the gallery were nominated by their art teachers and chosen by Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig. Each work of art showcased is framed and bears a brass plate identifying the student-artist's name, grade level, and year the piece was completed. The young artists each received a framed certificate of achievement acknowledging their outstanding artistic talent at a special ceremony held on June 19.

Also honored at the ceremony were Lauren David, Joseph Garguilo, and Nicolette Giordano, who were chosen as the winners of the Fine Arts Festival, which was held during the district's annual budget vote and board trustee election. Each student was awarded a \$100 savings bond from COPTA, the Copiague Teachers Association.

Congratulations to the following artists for their induction into the Superintendent's Art Gallery: Deauville Gardens Elementary School: Emmanuel Espinal; Great Neck Road Elementary School: Claudia Arevalo, Eliud Bonilla, and Michelle Seizeme; Susan E. Wiley Elementary School: Joshua Georges, Quoiyah Headley, and Venessa Seguino; Copiague Middle School: Natasha Allen, Davonte Lynch, Berenice Nunez, Ashley Parada, and Joselyn Sanchez; Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School: Crista Amador Martinez, Darrin Brown, Edwin Cruz, Liza Foley, Janet Fuentes, Nicolette Giordano, Lindsay Griffiths, Tahmena Khan, Marina Papadatos, Yessica Rodriguez, Joylin Santos, and Julia Woelk.

Board Recognizes Outstanding Student Achievements

Twice a year, the Copiague Board of Education sets aside a special night to honor students throughout the district for their unique contributions to society and their special academic successes. On June 18, the Board gathered in the middle school auditorium to celebrate 23 students during the bi-annual Board of Education Recognition Ceremony.

Congratulations to the following students: Deauville Gardens Elementary School: Wendy Carbajal Hernandez, Giancarlos Pacheco, and Lucas Queiroga; Great Neck Road Elementary School: Anne Mahnken and Judis Sanchez; Susan E. Wiley Elementary School: Aaron Eng and Austin Hernandez; Copiague Middle School: Morgan Cain, Mikaiya Moore, and Lesley Valerio Rosario; Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School: Victor Bena, Hugh Boyle, Joseph Brennan, Crisdry Brito, Dylan Cain, Michael Cesare, Edwin Cruz, Mykel Ellis, Daniel Estevez, Roger Gonzalez, Burns Milheron, Melissa Rodriguez, and Brandon Simoncic.



Students Are Tops at Theatre Awards

Theater Department members at the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School in the Copiague School District were recently honored by the Babylon Citizens Council on the Arts (BACCA) for their spring theater production of *West Side Story*. At the Teen Youth Theatre Awards (TOBY Awards), sponsored by BACCA, the production received the following awards from BACCA: Best Female Vocal – Dilara Altuner (Maria), Best Male Vocal – Matt Edlind (Tony), Best Ensemble, Best Dance, and the top honor of Outstanding Musical.

BACCA is a nonprofit arts organization serving the needs of residents, artists, and art organizations in the Town of Babylon.



Fun-Filled Days

As this year's school days came to an end, the elementary-level students in the district collectively celebrated their accomplishments to date and capped off another great school year during their building's field day celebrations. The days held friendly and competitive atmospheres, helped instill a strong sense of Eagle pride, and encouraged healthy living.

At Deauville Gardens, the kindergarten, first, and second-grade students traveled with their classes through stations, while the older grades competed for first, second, and third places in activities ranging from potato sack and relay races to challenges that tested their coordination and precision. At Great Neck Road, the all-day schoolwide event was brightly colored, as the students wore t-shirts supplied by the PTA while rotating through their fun-filled activities. In addition to celebrating school spirit at field day, the Susan E. Wiley students honored their diversity with flags, which decorated the field and playground, representing the students' various cultural backgrounds.

Continuing a tradition started a number of years ago, members of the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Varsity Club volunteered their time to assist the physical education teachers.



Spring Sports Wrap-Up

SPORT	NAME	AWARD
Boys Track	Jonathon Argueta	All-League, All-Division 400, All-Division 4x400
Girls Track	Ashley Arquer	All-League
Boys Track	Michael Benson	All-League, All-Division 110HH, LJ, 4x400, Division Champ 400IH, All-County 110HH (2nd) And All-State 110HH (6th)
Boys Track	DJ Brown	All-Division 800, All-Division 4x400
Boys Track	Justin Brown	All-League, All-Division TJ & LJ
Girls Track	Zyare Brown	All-League
Boys Track	Tyrrell English	All-Division Pentathlon
Boys Track	Maurice Epps	All-League, All-Division HJ
Baseball	Chris Falci	All-League
Girls Track	Janel Francis	All-League, All-County, All-State, Top 5 Outstanding Athlete Girls Track & Field
Boys Lacrosse	Javon Garrett	All Division
Boys Track	Desmond Guidroz	All-League TJ & HJ, All-Division 4x400
Girls Track	Ashley Jackson	All-League
Girls Track	Shanisha Jeffrey	All-League
Girls Lacrosse	Tahmena Khan	All-Division
Boys Track	Andrew Marino	All-Division 4x400
Girls Track	Cypher McCloud	All-League
Boys Track	Willie McFadden III	All-League 100
Boys Track	Wesley Merriwether	All-Division 3000SC
Girls Lacrosse	Jessica Murphy	Unsung Hero, Academic All-American
Baseball	Josh Outsen	Academic All-League
Boys Lacrosse	Isaiah Stewart	Unsung Hero Award – Suffolk County
Girls Track	Brittney Walsh	All-League
Softball	Caitlin Zowak	All-League

Hoops for Hearts

Copiague Middle School students hit the courts and participated in a basketball-related obstacle course in an effort to help others develop healthy hearts in the school's annual *Hoops for Hearts*. The program is a basketball fundraising event for the American Heart Association that promotes physical fitness. The goal of the event was to increase awareness about heart disease and related illnesses, as well as raise money for research, prevention, and educational programs.

"Our students really stepped up to not only help with a very worthy cause, but to also bring awareness to the importance of good exercise and proper diet – not to mention some outstanding basketball skills," said Physical Education Teacher Stephen Rebholz.

Organized by the middle school Physical Education Department, the students raised more than \$2,600 for the American Heart Association.



COPIAGUE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO HOLD FALL SPORTS PHYSICALS

Sports physicals will take place on Thursday, August 9 from 12 noon to 3:00 p.m. in the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School nurse's office. Any high school or middle school student who wishes to participate in a fall sport must receive a physical before he or she will be allowed to play.





They're Inducted!

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

To recognize students for their outstanding scholarship, leadership, service, and character, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School's Isabella M. Driscoll Chapter of the National Honor Society inducted 27 new members. Throughout the ceremony, the inductees and their parents listened to words of advice and congratulations by Superintendent of Schools Charles Leunig, the executive board of the National Honor Society, their advisors Rose Ann Fuss and Denise Raimondi, and the special guest speaker, retiring band teacher John Wevers.

"These students represent the best that Copiague has to offer," remarked Ms. Fuss. Added Mrs. Raimondi, "These students have all made good choices, and hopefully they continue to make those good choices."

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

On Wednesday, May 30, the Copiague Middle School's Eagle Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) inducted 47 new members. In front of members of the Board of Education, administration, and family and friends, the seventh and eighth-graders participated in a candle lighting ceremony where they celebrated the four pillars of the NJHS – service, character, scholarship, and leadership.

During the ceremony, the new inductees heard congratulations from Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kathleen Bannon, Principal Andrew Lagnado, advisors Paul Harvey and Francesca Spinelli, and the student-chosen guest speaker, science teacher Jennifer Palazzo. Additionally, the NJHS executive board of Marcus Weeks (President), Steven Szabo (Vice President), Mackenzie (Secretary), and Skylah McBean (Treasurer) spoke to the audience about the pillars and what they mean to NJHS current and future members.



Introducing

Deauville Gardens EAST and WEST

The Copiague School District is pleased to announce that the New York State Board of Regents approved its application to create two smaller K-5 schools under one roof at Deauville Gardens Elementary School.

"Thank you to all individuals who were involved in the planning and preparation for this big change – a change that we are certain will create improved educational opportunities and convenience for the children and families of Deauville Gardens," said Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig. "Additionally, the two smaller schools will provide increased flexibility and opportunities that will allow our teaching and administrative staff to better meet the challenges that lie ahead with respect to the new Common Core Standards, APPR and overall accountability."

The two schools, Deauville Gardens West Elementary School (wing closest to Deauville Blvd.) and Deauville Gardens East Elementary School (wing closest to Waldo St.) will each have their own schedule, whereby families with siblings in both primary and intermediate grades will now be able to attend school on the same schedule, which should prove to be much more convenient. The building schedules will be as follows:

Deauville East 9:05 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Deauville West 9:30 a.m. – 3:40 p.m.

At a special meeting of the Board of Education on July 26, the Board approved the appointment of Joseph Buccello as principal of the Deauville Gardens East Elementary School. Michael Kelly, who was serving as the principal of the former Deauville Gardens Elementary School, will now be serving as principal of Deauville Gardens West Elementary School.

Copiague Schools Announce Free and Reduced-Price Meal Policy

Copiague School District has announced a free and reduced-price meal (free milk) policy for Copiague area school children for the coming school year. Local school officials have adopted family qualification criteria to assist them in determining eligibility. For details regarding eligibility and pricing, please contact the Business Office in the Copiague School District at (631) 842-4015 x530.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Mr. Charles A. Leunig, **Superintendent of Schools**