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District Hosts COMMUNITY SUMMIT

COPIAGUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS - A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

More than 300 community residents and local legislators gathered together in the high school cafeteria for the District's annual Community Summit, "Copiague – Our Community, Our Kids, Our Future."

Changing format this year, community members enjoyed a breakfast as members of the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Jazz Band, under the direction of Eric Dobmeier, played a few musical selections. High School junior Stephanie Fischer performed "The Star-Spangled Banner" before Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig welcomed guests and introduced Board of Education President Michael L. Greb, who spoke on the opportunities afforded to Copiague's students and how the increased mandates and reduced financial assistance from the state could negatively impact those opportunities.

Continuing on Mr. Greb's theme, Mr. Leunig presented the "State of the Copiague School District," in which he discussed the challenges currently facing the district. "As we gather today, we find ourselves at a crossroads in our school district and our community," said Mr. Leunig. "In the last few years, our story has been one of growth and achievement. But the last few years



have also been about struggles and challenges."

He went on to discuss the struggles of decreasing aid, increasing costs, increasing mandates and aging facilities. "We remain educationally strong, but the future of both the educational and financial foundations we have built over the years will remain uncertain unless we receive relief from the state soon."

Following Mr. Leunig's "State of the Copiague School District," State Sen. Charles J. Fuschillo Jr., State Assemblyman Robert K. Sweeney and Town of Babylon Supervisor Richard Schaffer addressed the audience. During the summit, audience members were introduced to the Class of 2013 top 10, enjoyed a performance of the "College Day" song by Deauville Gardens East first-grade students in Danielle Rizzo's class, viewed a video

compiled by Director of Technology Todd Harris and Technology Trainer Dennis Pettas, and participated in a world café facilitated by national leadership development consultant Dr. Ray Jorgensen.

The District also took a moment during the program to present the Copiague Fire Department with an "Unsung Hero Award" for their assistance to the community following Superstorm Sandy. "Typically, we present this award once a year to a staff member, but we felt it was appropriate to honor the fire department and its members for going above and beyond during the community's time of need," said Mr. Leunig.

To conclude the event, attendees exited through the gymnasium, where a student and community expo was set up to provide a glimpse of the exciting offerings within the schools and community.

Copiague School District Copiague, N.Y. 11726

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Resident
Copiague School District



A Message Superintendent

Dear Residents,

Welcome to the Spring 2013 edition of Copiague Connections! As you leaf through the pages of our latest district newsletter, you will find that our students, staff and Board of Education members have been hard at work, as usual. As this issue arrives in your mailbox, we will be in the early stages of the final quarter of the school year, the home stretch to June 21st and high school graduation!

The cover feature of this spring's newsletter focuses on our annual Community Summit event, which was held last month. We had record-breaking attendance of over 300 people, who were on hand to hear about the state of our schools as well as the status of the state budget, which directly affects our school budgeting. This year's Summit, which incorporated some new features, garnered very positive feedback from attendees.

We have a number of other features highlighting both students and staff members who have received honors and recognition for their various efforts and achievements. The balance of the newsletter provides some information about fun and enlightening programs that have been taking place throughout our schools, such as our annual Pops Concert. As usual, the theme that weaves all of these features together is our highly motivated students who excel at the variety of activities the Copiague Schools offer as a result of the generosity and support of the Copiague school community.

As I close this message to you, please know that in addition to ensuring that these wonderful programs are available for our students, your Board of Education and Administration have been working for the last few months on building next year's school budget and will have completed the budgetbuilding process shortly before you receive this latest edition of the newsletter. As is the case each year, the Board is determined to bring to the community a comprehensive, fiscally sound budget that builds upon the fiscal discipline of recent budgets, but also continues to preserve all current academic programs and extra-curricular activities for students. As a reminder, the school budget vote will be on Tuesday, May 21st.

I hope you enjoy these spring months as we approach the end of the school year. We have much to be proud of in the Copiague Schools!

Sincerely,

Chalio Gfor

Charles A. Leunig Superintendent of Schools





COPIAGUE STUDENTS Recognized by Board

Prior to the Copiague Board of Education's Jan. 28 meeting, the Board recognized 23 students for their outstanding achievements. During the ceremony, Associate Superintendent Dr. Kathleen Bannon introduced each student and read a descriptive paragraph detailing the reason for the student's recognition. Every student was also presented with a framed certificate to commemorate his or her accomplishment.

The district congratulates the following students for their recognition:

Deauville Gardens East Elementary School

Kimberly Berrios-Ortega Kevin Portillo Perez

Deauville Gardens West Elementary School

Marilu Vargas Antonia Wiggins Jhonny Yepes

Great Neck Road Elementary School

Jeff Cruz Monique Lowndes

Susan E. Wiley Elementary School

Angelica Alvarado Gwendolyn Neger

Copiague Middle School

Aaron Eng Anisse Galvez Rachel Korba Claudia Mötley Amorello Penick Katlynn Reed

Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School

Luke Bordonaro
Marleny Collado Rodriguez
Celeste Canales
Stwart Peña
Juan Taveras
Lizbelle Taveras
Tshay Williams
Imani Wilson

Introducing Sara Pizzinger Director of

CAFETERIA SERVICES

Following the retirement of long-time Director of Cafeteria Services Linda Leonardi in late February, the district hired Sara Pizzinger to fill the position.

Ms. Pizzinger joins the district from the Shoreham-

Wading River Central School District, where she ran the school lunch program for more than three years. Previous to her years in Shoreham, Ms. Pizzinger was an Assistant Food Service Director at the Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego BOCES in Norwich, N.Y. and the Executive Chef at the Canasawacta Country Club, also in Norwich.

Ms. Pizzinger holds a Culinary Arts Degree from SUNY Cobleskill College of Agriculture and Technology. Prior to her college career, she graduated from the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Culinary Arts Program.

"I'm looking forward to working in a district that has an already outstanding program and implementing new items and ideas to bring it to the next level," remarked Ms. Pizzinger. "Nutrition for our students is very important in life and education, so I am excited to have this opportunity to bring my knowledge of culinary arts to the Copiague District."





Noticing an enthusiasm and excitement for cooking in her students during their home and careers lessons, Copiague Middle School teacher Karen Kazlauskas started the Future Chefs Club.

Meeting twice monthly, the future chefs gather in the home and careers classrooms to create their own healthy meals and snacks.

"The students are responsible for every part of the dishes, from the prep work to the actual cooking, as well as the cleanup," said Mrs. Kazlauskas. "The club also teaches the students independence, responsibility, collaboration, team work and self-esteem."

The club, which acts as an extension of the home and careers class, allows Mrs. Kazlauskas an opportunity to introduce different recipes, ingredients and spices to the students, all of which are purchased using money from the Box Tops for Education program.



Each meeting features a specific theme, including healthy appetizers for the Super Bowl and desserts



for Valentine's Day or an entire meal centered on the cuisine of a specific culture, such as Mexican. Once the food is prepared and everything is cleaned up, the students sit together with Mrs. Kazlauskas to enjoy their meal together as a family.

Also through the club, the students work on community service projects, such as making dog biscuits and donating them to a local animal shelter.



Under the guidance of adviser Louise Curci, members of the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Distributive Education Clubs of America represented the District in the State Career Conference held in Rochester, N.Y. The Copiague chapter of DECA won three first-place trophies, three second-place trophies and nine gold medals.

"Our students represented Copiague enthusiastically, with the utmost professionalism, leadership and dedication," remarked Mrs. Curci.

The District congratulates the following students:

Tatyana Bellamy-Walker: First place, Extemporaneous Public
Speaking, and gold medal
Isabel Colon: First place, Wholesale Selling, and gold medal
Abigail Trautwig: First place, Visual Advertising, and gold medal
Alessandra Altruda: Second place, Decision-making - Marketing
Human Resources, and gold medal
Katarina Junge: Second place, Broadcast Advertising, and gold medal
Joylin Santos: Second place, Visual Advertising, and gold medal
Zoreia Cuffy: Gold medal Public Speaking Prepared

Zoreia Cuffy: Gold medal, Public Speaking Prepared
Sasha McKenzie: Gold medal, Public Speaking
Ashley Simon: Gold medal, Extemporaneous Public Speaking





In a Frignd's Name

For the third year in a row, members of the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Copiague Heroes (previously known as the Proud Girls) sponsored an indoor one-mile run/walk. Utilizing the second and third floors of the high school, students and staff members completed the mile while raising funds for the Brittney Walsh Memorial Scholarship, which will be given to a graduating senior during the Senior Awards Ceremony held in June.

"Brittney really meant a lot to this school, and sponsoring this event is the least we could do for her memory," said senior Tshay Williams. Added senior Amer Islam, "It feels really nice to be able to put your time into organizing something for a good cause, especially when we're honoring the memory of a former classmate."

According to advisers Dr. Linda Caputo and Alline Torrey, the students choose a different organization every year to which they donate the funds they raise through the run/walk.

"Brittney really meant a lot to this school, and sponsoring this event is the least we could do for her memory."

Project **ASTRO**

This past February, students in the elementary Talented and Gifted Program participated in Project ASTRO, a program that links teachers and students with amateur and professional astronomers, with the overall goal of increasing students' interest in astronomy and science.

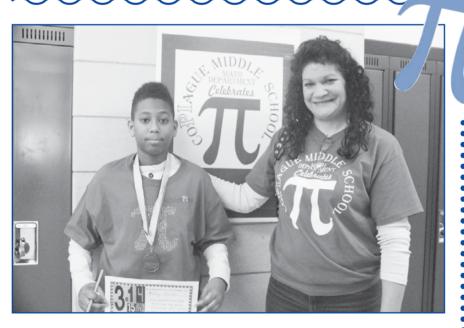
During the program, which was organized by TAG teacher Linda Scarth and amateur astronomers Richard A. Huber, Linda Prince and Gordon Schaefering from the Amateur Observers' Society, the elementary students learned about Mars and NASA's missions of discovery of "the little red planet."

Following an introduction and two short videos, the students worked in groups to research Mars and figure out survival tactics should humans ever colonize on Mars. Using chocolate pieces as rock samples, the students were tasked with analyzing the samples as if they were rocks from Mars. Equipped with a remote control and a laptop computer, they were also charged with acting as mission control and landing a model rover on Mars, as NASA did when they landed their rovers Opportunity and Curiosity.

Funded by the National Science Foundation and two branches of NASA, Project ASTRO was developed by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific and,



for the Copiague students, run by the Cradle of Aviation Museum. According to the website for the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, "The main focus of Project ASTRO educator-astronomer partnerships is hands-on, inquiry-based activities that put students in the position of acting like scientists – as they come to understand more about the universe."



Pi to the 164th Place

Thursday, March 14 marked the annual worldwide celebration of the mathematical constant Pi. At Copiague Middle School, seventh-graders in Melody Cesare's class put their brainpower to the test in her annual competition to see who could recite Pi from memory to the furthest digit. This year's winner, breaking the record of 101 digits set last year, was Naliq Finch, who recited Pi from memory to 164 digits. Placing second was Adrea Campos with 158 digits and tied for third place were Kyle Reed and Samantha Sanchez with 91 digits.

Animals 101

Kindergarten students from Deauville Gardens East and Deau Elementary Schools received a hands-on lesson in mammals, bird with Sweetbriar Nature Center. Throughout the 50-minute press were given the opportunity to pet the animals and learn about the

difference between cold- and warmblooded animals, all in an effort to educate the students about some of their animal friends. During the visit, the students were introduced to Henrietta the chicken, a box turtle and a water turtle, a ball python snake, a chinchilla and a hedgehog.



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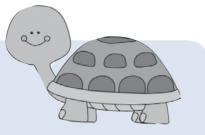
Promoting Literacy Throug

Celebrating the forefathers and current leaders of the United States of America while promoting literacy and parent involvement, Susan E. Wiley Elementary School hosted its annual Parents as Reading Partners program. Sponsored by the PTA, this year's theme was "Presidents."

PARP is a collaborative effort among parents, staff and community to build a reading partnership between the home and the school, and encourages parents and guardians to read with their children for at least 15 minutes per day. The goal of the program is to promote family literacy, encourage the development of dedicated reading and provide opportunities for parents to learn ways to support their children's literacy development.

As an incentive to the students to spend time reading at home with a partner, the class, on each grade level, with the most reading at character party, for which the students came to school dressed as the n





ville Gardens West ls and reptiles during a visit entations, the kindergartners eir natural habitats and the





1 Spotlight on Fitness

This past March, physical education teachers at the district's four elementary schools - Deauville Gardens East, Deauville Gardens West, Great Neck Road and Susan E. Wiley – hosted individual family nights related to the physical education curriculum. The annual Spotlight on Fitness nights give the kindergarten through fifth-grade students an opportunity to highlight what they have been learning in class, and in some cases, invite their parents and families to participate in the

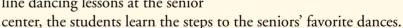
Physical education classes help students develop skills such as balance, coordination and good sportsmanship and enhance their physical, mental and emotional health.

The physical education teachers who coordinated the events are Wendy Hrzich, Barbara Olsen and John Sack (Deauville Gardens East and West); William Bennett and Rachel Cone (Great Neck Road); and Pam Atlas and Anthony Cipriano (Susan E. Wiley).





For almost 10 years, 40 members of the Copiague Middle School Builders Club, along with their adviser Maria Ostrofsky, have traveled to the Tanner Park Senior Center for Valentine's Day. During their visit, the students create Valentine's Day cards for the seniors and deliver the special cards with an artificial rose. With their visit coinciding with the weekly line dancing lessons at the senior



"I like to put a smile on people's faces and make life better for them if I can," said eighth-grader Nicholas Hernandez, president of the Builders Club. "I love getting to dance with the seniors. It makes all of us happy and puts a smile on their faces and ours!"







For a week in March, the students at Great Neck Road Elementary School received a hands-on lesson in circus skills. Two representatives from the National Circus Project, a cultural arts organization that preserves and promotes the traditional circus arts through education and entertainment, visited the physical education classes and taught the students various activities.

During the PTA-sponsored event, the students learned such skills as juggling, balancing, plate spinning and devil stick manipulation. Culminating the weeklong lessons, the fifthgrade students performed a circus act for their fellow students utilizing their newly learned skills.



ading minutes at the end of the program nain character from their favorite book.

A Night of Popular Music

It was a night to remember at the annual Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School's Pops Concert. Kicking off the show was the Madrigal Choir, directed by Gina Occhiogrosso, with an explosive performance of Taio Cruz's "Dynamite," followed by director Eric Dobmeier and the concert band's performance of selections from *Les Misérables*.

Throughout the high-energy show, audience members were treated to individual and group performances of popular songs from today and yesterday, including current hits such as Psy's "Gangnam Style" and The Wanted's "Glad You Came," as well as older favorites "Jessie's Girl" by Rick Springfield and Cyndi Lauper's famous female anthem "Girls Just Want to Have Fun." The night concluded with a show-stopping performance of Fun.'s "Some Nights" by the chorus and drum line.

The jazz band also performed three selections, including the Hoagy Carmichael version of "Georgia on My Mind."









Artist Reception

To culminate her students' unit on sculptures and study of artist Tim Burton, Copiague Middle School Art Teacher Maria Ostrofsky hosted an artist reception for the students in her seventh-grade art class and their families. The reception was held for the official unveiling of the students' art pieces, which are on display in the main hallway of the middle school.

Utilizing wire, newspaper, wheat paste and their imagination, the students created 3-D wire armatures. Their sculptures, which they worked on for more than a month, had to include hands, arms and a body while being shaped in motion. The 27 art pieces include dancers, athletes and even a ninja.





Picture's Worth a Thousand Words

Three art students in Lorraine Ciccotto's photography class at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School – Nicole Donato, Chris Falci and Sheyla Hernandez – have been selected as finalists in the National Photographer's Forum 33rd annual College and High School Photography Contest sponsored by Nikon. Their photographs will be published in the hardcover book *Best of College and High School Photography 2013*.

Game, Set, Match

Following the success of its elementary summer tennis camp, the Copiague School District initiated a Kids Tennis Club pilot program at Great Neck Road Elementary School. The program, which was run by Reneé Lemmerman and the Long Island Foundation for Education & Sports, was offered weekly after school for six weeks.

The Kids Tennis Club offered students an introduction to tennis in a safe, openplay setting through supervised play and interactive activities. During the program, each student was provided with all of the necessary equipment to successfully learn

the sport of tennis, have fun and gain confidence in his or her athletic abilities. According to Peter Cesare, Director of Physical Education and Athletics, the District hopes to expand the pilot program to Copiague's other three elementary schools during the next school year.

LIFFES is an organization of community-based tennis programs dedicated to introducing all children to a lifetime sport.

Boys Bowling



Winter Sports Round-Up

<u>Sport</u>	NAME	AWARD
Boys Winter Track	Jonathan Argueta	All-League 300, All-League
·		4x400 relay
Boys Winter Track	DJ Brown	All-League 600, All-League
·		4x400 relay
Boys Winter Track	Maurice Epps	All-League LJ, All-League HJ,
·		All-Division HJ, All-County HJ,
		All-State HJ
Boys Winter Track	Aaron McFadden	Sophomore County Champ,
		All-League, All-Division,
		All-County 55HH
Boys Winter Track	Andrew Marino	All-League 1,000, All-League
		4x400 relay
Boys Winter Track	Max Tsar	All-League 4x400 relay
Boys Winter Track	Jose Villatoro	All-League 4x400 relay
Boys Basketball	Kevin Roberts	All-League
Boys Basketball	Frederick Millar	All-League, All-Conference,
		All-County, League IV
		Player of Year
Boys Basketball	Stephen Scales	All-League Academic
Girls Basketball	Ihnacinse Grady	All-League, All-Conference,
		All-County
Girls Basketball	Tracey McFaddan	All-League
Girls Basketball	Mikaiya Moore	All-League, All-Conference,
		All-County
Girls Basketball	Iasia O'Garro	All-League
Wrestling	David Bunn	All-League
Wrestling	Isai Gonzalez	All-League
Wrestling	Mike Illicete	All-League
Wrestling	Tamar Lowndes	All-League
Wrestling	Jeff Urbina	All-League
Wrestling	Jesse Ventura	All-League
Girls Bowling	Keri Brower	All-League
Girls Bowling	Diamond Hunter	All-League
Girls Bowling	Justine Schaefer	All-League
Girls Winter Track	Ashley Arquer	All-League
Girls Winter Track	Zyare Brown	All-League
Girls Winter Track	Ashley Jackson	All-League

Cory Webster



Winter Athletes Honored in Copiague

For 13 years, the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Booster Club has sponsored sports awards dinners honoring student-athletes following the fall, winter and spring sports seasons. On March 5, the club recognized more than 200 students from the boys and girls basketball, boys and girls bowling, cheerleading, step, boys and girls winter track and wrestling teams.

During the evening, awards for most valuable player and most improved player, as well as a special coach's award, were handed out to members of each team. Additionally, the student with the highest average for each team for the season was awarded the Golden Eagle award. Golden Eagle awardees for the Winter 2013 season were: Alessandra Altruda (girls basketball), Luke Bordonaro (boys bowling), Dominique Brown (step team), Michael Hararah (wrestling), Diamond Hunter (girls bowling), Natalie Korba (cheerleading), Frederick Millar (boys basketball), Stwart Peña (boys track) and Lizbelle Taveras (girls track).

High-Jumping to States

The Copiague School District congratulates Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School senior Maurice Epps for his performance at the New York State and Federation Track and Field Championship, held March 2 at Cornell University. At the meet,



Maurice high-jumped a new personal record of 6-06, besting his previous record of 6-04 and placing third in New York State.

Copiague Boosters Honor Supporter

To commemorate the 27th annual National Girls and Women in Sports Day, the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Booster Club presented a plaque of recognition to Toni Clemens for her consistent support of the Copiague athletic department. A longtime resident of Copiague,



Mrs. Clemens graduated from Copiague High School, where she was an active member in the athletic department as well as a school leader. Currently, she is a teaching assistant at Great Neck Road Elementary School and Vice President of the Booster Club. Additionally, Mrs. Clemens is active in the Copiague community, having served as a youth league coach, religion teacher and Cub and Girl Scout leader. Pictured left to right: Peter Cesare, Director of Physical Education and Athletics, Toni Clemens and Booster Club President Sheila Scales.

All-League

Dates to Remember

MAY 6-17
Advanced Placement Testing

May 13

Public Hearing & Board of Education Meeting

May 21

School District Budget Vote & Board of Education Trustee Vote Great Neck Road School 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

May 27 Schools Closed

JUNE 11-20

New York State Regents Exams

JUNE 21
Last Day of School

JUNE 21 High School Graduation

Prekindergarten Registration

For the past 15 years the district has offered a free, full year preschool program for four-year-olds in Copiague, thanks to a grant from New York State.

This year, registration for the Universal Prekindergarten Program will be on Monday, May 6, 2013 between 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at the Susan E. Wiley Elementary School, 365 Scudder Avenue, Copiague. A completed registration form (available on the district website at www.copiague.k12.ny.us or at the Central Office Reception desk) must be presented at the time of registration along with the following forms:

- Original birth certificate.
- Proof of residency provided by current utility bill, property tax bill, house deed/mortgage agreement or notarized landlord's affidavit.
 (Please note: A telephone bill is not an acceptable proof of residency.).
- Proof of recent medical checkup and proof of immunization.
- Parent/Guardian will be asked to provide current photo ID and emergency contact information.

If you need the district to send you the registration form, please call (631) 842-4015, ext. 510.

In the field his

Set in present-day New York's Washington Heights neighborhood, *In the Heights* tells the story of love, loss, courage and culture over a three-day period from July 3-5. For three days in March, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School students took to the stage and performed their rendition of the Broadway musical.

Leading a group of talented student-actors was senior Angel Aracena, who performed the main role of Usnavi de la Vega. Joining Angel were Stephanie Fischer as Nina Rosario, David Szabo as Benny, Lindsay Griffiths as Vanessa, Jodi-Ann Carter as Abuela Claudia, Kyle Beck as Sonny, Arianna Espinal as Daniela and Marcia Aracena as Carla. Additionally, Richard Taveras and Marissa Ramirez portrayed Nina's parents, Kevin and Camila Rosario, while Dimitri Posy, Oscar Fernandez, Maria Ospina

Benitez and Jeffrey Yanes played Graffiti Pete, Jose/Domingo, Yolanda and Piragua Guy, respectively.

Gina Occhiogrosso directed the musical and received support from Assistant Director Michelle Budion, Vocal Director Marc Levenson, Choreographer Sylvia Walsh, Costume Designer Meredith Coates, Set Designer Lauren Lefkowitz and Pit Orchestra Conductor Eric Dobmeier.









VOTER REGISTRATION

It is important that you play an active role in deciding how your child will be educated. Continuous voter registration is available in the Office of the District Clerk from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, when school is in session, for both the Copiague School District and Copiague Public Memorial Library. For more information, contact the District Clerk at 842-4015 ext. 501. Residents who have voted or registered at any Annual or Special School District meeting or election held within the last four (4) years, or have voted at a general election or been registered with the Board of Elections of Suffolk County within the last four (4) years, are eligible to vote. The last day to register for this vote is Tuesday, May 14.

If you would like to register to vote, you must:

- Be a citizen of the United States.
- Be 18 years of age or over.
- Be a resident of the Copiague School District for at least 30 days prior to the voting date.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Applications for absentee ballots are available at the Office of the District Clerk and must be completed and returned at least seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter.

BUDGET VOTE AND BOARD ELECTION: MAY 21, 2013

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Michael L. Greb, **President**

Doris Fischer, *Vice President* Rosemary Natoli, *2nd Vice President*Laura Gavey Henry Johnson Everett E. Newman III Brian J. Sales

Mr. Charles A. Leunig, Superintendent of Schools