

# COMMUNITY CONTACT



**June 2011**

**SOUTH PLAINFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **Letter from Dr. Gary Bowen, Acting Superintendent of Schools**

As the school year winds to a close, I wish to thank everyone for their support of our educational missions throughout the year. This community's reputation regarding interest, participation, and support of school-related programs and activities is well-known. It is also well-known that students learn and grow in direct proportion to how well we partner together as caring adults with one purpose in mind – the children. Many hundreds of people contribute the time and energy necessary to make all South Plainfield schools wonderful centers for teaching and learning. We are so very proud of the many wonderful accomplishments by our students, staff, parents, and supporters. In fact, I've had the pleasure of getting to know many individuals who serve as members of our staff, parent-school organizations, elected officials, the Education Foundation, various school volunteers, athletic, performing arts and academic boosters, and numerous stakeholders throughout the South Plainfield educational community.

As reflected in the pages that follow in this newsletter, I am proud of what our students have achieved this year and look forward to even greater strides in the future. I hope you enjoy the many accomplishments shared with you in this edition of *Community Contact*.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**2010-11—Sharon Miller, Chair**

**Bill Seesselberg, Carol Byrne, and  
Debbie Boyle**

**2011-12—Sharon Miller, Chair**

**John Farinella, Carol Byrne, and Bill  
Seesselberg.**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

**Dr. Frank A. Cocchiola, Jr., Interim Assistant  
Superintendent of Schools**

**Nick Puleio, Interim Business Administrator/  
School Board Secretary**

### **Inside this issue:**

- **Retirements**
- **Budget Information**
- **Curriculum Items**
- **CAPA Visit**
- **Athletic Achievements**
- **Individual School Achievements**

### **Board of Education Members**

**Jim Giannakis, Pres. Bill Seesselberg**  
**Debbie Boyle, V. P. Joseph Sorrentino**  
**Chris Hubner John Farinella**  
**Gary Stephenson Carol Byrne**  
**Sharon Miller**

## Summer Reading Tips—Dr. Frank Cocchiola, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools

**Summer Reading Tips for Parents:** Summer should not mean taking a break from learning, especially reading. Studies show that most students experience a loss of reading skills over the summer months, but children who continue to read actually gain skills. Reading builds visualization, thinking and language abilities. Please see our website for the [Summer Reading List](#).

Please remember that the summer is a time to relax and enjoy the pleasures of childhood. Make reading fun. In addition to the resources available at South Plainfield Public Library, the following are a few tips to make reading enjoyable for your children this summer:

ReadWriteThink.org [www.readwritethink.org](http://www.readwritethink.org) offers activities and projects, games and tools, tips and how-to's for ages kindergarten through grade 12. Check out the Parent & Afterschool sections.

Reading Rockets [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org) offers information and resources for teachers and parents including booklists for children of various ages.

National Summer Learning Association

[www.summerlearning.org](http://www.summerlearning.org) offers a wealth of news and resources about summer learning.



### RETIREMENTS

The Board of Education wishes to express its appreciation for the many years of dedicated service the following retirees have provided to the community, school district and students of South Plainfield.

- Daniel Radakovich-High School Industrial Arts Teacher-39 years
- Tracy Murray-High School Music Teacher-21 years
- Linda Schwebel-Middle School Mathematics Teacher-24 years
- Michele Fidler-Kennedy School Elementary Teacher-24 years
- Louise Mruz-Franklin School Elementary Teacher-40 years
- Patricia Higgins-Middle School Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant-22 years
- Kathleen Murano-Assistant Transportation Supervisor-18 years as Van Driver and 7 years as Asst. T.S.
- Donna Rowlands-Instructional Aide—23 years
- Joanne Otlowski—Riley School Media specialist—16 years.
- Nancy Donahue—Grant School Grade 5 Teacher—40 years.
- Mike Buggie—Athletic Director/PE Supervisor & teacher - 37 years

## 2011-12 SCHOOL BUDGET

The defeat of the 2011-12 school budget by 114 votes has compounded the already dire fiscal situation in the district. Even before the budget vote dozens of staff members were slated for a reduction in force in order to prepare a budget that did not exceed the state imposed cap. These staff reductions were done by a detailed data analysis of class size, efficiency and priority of programs



## CAPA VISIT

On March 7 - 10 a NJ Department of Education team came to South Plainfield to review the educational program at Grant School. This was due to issues with State Assessment Test results in the past three years. The process was called Collaborative Assessment for Planning and Achievement (CAPA). The visiting team analyzed the Curriculum, Assessment History, Instruction, School Culture, Parent Involvement, School Support Services, Professional Development and Leadership. In each instance the committee noted the strengths of the programs and made recommendations for improvement. The final report is due from the DOE before the end of the school year. Some recommendations already implemented are:

- Daily Basic Skills remediation in language arts and math.
- Daily administrative "walk-throughs"
- Appropriate professional development.
- Curriculum analysis.

Plans for 2010-11 include common prep time for teachers, more differentiated instruction, School newspaper, new lesson plan format, Enrichment (G & T) Program enhancement and focused curriculum articulation.

## CURRICULUM REVISION

There are two strands of curriculum development underway. The first involves adhering to the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) which were revised in 2009. Scheduled for analysis and revision for 2010-11 are Science and PE/Health.

In addition to the NJ Standards the district is working to adapt its present curriculum sequence of instruction in Language Arts Literacy (LAL) and Mathematics to the new national Common Core State Standards (CCCS). These Standards have been adopted by 44 states and mark a national initiative to align the curriculum in these two important content areas to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills movement is designed to prepare students to succeed in college, career and life, and to be successful in international competition. They focus on subject area mastery, skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, technology literacy, financial literacy and global competence. This global competence refers to awareness, financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy and health and wellness awareness. Life skills include leadership, ethics accountability, adaptability, personal responsibility, self direction and social responsibility.

The revision of the math CCCS is underway. Grades K – 2 will be in place by September 2011, and grades 3 – 12 will be worked on during the 2011-12 school year. Language Arts Literacy (LAL) is slotted for rewriting during the 2011-12 school year with implementation in 2012-12. This process will be escalated in that grades 7 & 8 may be in place by September 2011.

An area of need in the district has been the Enrichment (G & T) Program. Personnel have been working on this program since February and a program will be provided to the board for approval before the end of the 2011-12 school year. This will include the identification of G & T student participants and the appropriate delivery of services.

Math has been a focal point for curriculum analysis. The Middle School Algebra sequence and the high school math program up to and including Advanced Placement Calculus are both being reviewed closely for possible revision.

## SOUTH PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



### ATHLETIC PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## Mike Bugey was named the Middlesex County Athletic Director of the Year

### Athletic Achievements:

- Alexis Alba was selected to the first team all state girls' gymnastics team by the NJ Girls' Gymnastics Coaches Assoc. Alexis tied the school record in the uneven bars scoring a 9.6 (Tied the record set by Kim Dziomba). She set new school records in the vault with a 9.575 and for the All Around with an impressive 37.65.
- Field Hockey won the GMC Championship. Danielle Butrico was selected as Middlesex County Player of the year
- Anthony Ashnault - New Jersey State Wrestling Champion at 112 pounds. First South Plainfield Wrestler to win two state titles (103 pound state champion in 2010). Middlesex County Wrestler of the Year.
- Troy Heilman - New Jersey State Wrestling tournament runner up at 119 pounds.
- Tyler Hunt New - Jersey State Wrestling tournament 4th place finisher at 130 pounds.
- James Gerber was named Middlesex County Pole Vault champion at the GMC meet after a jump of 12'6", a personal best.



- Wrestling - Ranked #2 in New Jersey. GMC Champions, District 12 Champions (27 consecutive years, a New Jersey State record), NJSIAA Group 3 Sectional Champions, Group 3 State Runnerups, Greater Middlesex Conference Red Division Champions, #1 Team Middlesex County/Star Ledger, #1 Team Area Courier News/Home News Tribune.
- Brandon Downes signed a Division 1 Baseball National Letter of Intent to attend the University of Virginia. Brandon batted .484 as a junior while driving in 49 runs and belting 15 home runs, both school records. His performance in the classroom is equally impressive, as he possesses a 3.9 GPA and is a member of the National Honor Society.
- Girls' Middle School Cross County- GMC Cross Country Champions 1<sup>st</sup> time in School History.
- Thalia Lopez named NJSIAA Scholar Athlete.

### Coaches Recognition:

- Kevin McCann - National Federation of High Schools New Jersey Coach of the Year, National Federation of High Schools Region 1 Coach of the Year (covers New England States, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. Coach McCann is a finalist for the National Federation of High Schools National Coach of the Year. GMC Coach of the Year, Northeast Region Coach of the Year.
- Meredith Garofalo—Gymnastics GMC Coach of the Year.
- Head Field Hockey coach Cheryl Hughes was named the GMC Coach of the Year.

### Girls Varsity Soccer Team: - Coach Danielle Chiera

The Girls South Plainfield High School Varsity Soccer team had a great season, achieving a school record 8 wins. They advanced to the second round of the county and state tournament. The entire soccer program participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Brain Aneurysm Awareness Walk on Long Island in order to raise awareness and provide support for survivors (their coach). Some individual honors include freshman, Carlee Gonzalez, earning NJGSCA recognition and All White Division; Emily Skula receiving All White Division and Second Team All Greater Middlesex County; Melissa Pastornak receiving a full camp scholarship for the ship Camp this summer for dedication; and Thalia Lotion for her academic and New Jersey National Girls Day Luncheon at Seton Hall.



### Boys' Varsity Soccer Team:- Coach Tony Perfilio

1. Record: 14-5-2
2. Semi-Finalist in GMC Tournament
3. All White Division: Shaun Alers, Sam Tejada, Dan Lyew, Edwin Molina; All State Coach's Poll: Sam Tejada, Edwin Molina; All County: Sam Tejada, Dan Lyew; All State Star Ledger: Sam Tejada; All Area 2nd Team Courier News: Sam Tejada; All State ESPN Rise: Sam Tejada

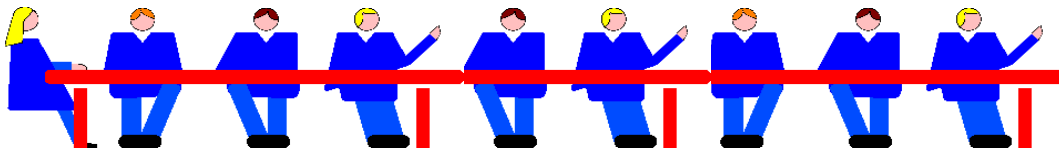
### Swim Team—Coach Stacey Closterman:

The SPHS swim team won the Wardlaw Relay's and receiving SPHS first 1<sup>st</sup> place trophy for swimming. Alison Huber received All-Conference and All-White Division for girls, Maggie Valentino and Gracie Piekarski received All-White Division for girls and Joey Cornelius received All-White Division for boys.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

On behalf of the community and school personnel, the members of the Board of Education wish to thank Pio Pennisi and Steve Bohn for the time they served on the South Plainfield Board of Education. Mr. Pennisi has been a board member for a total of 16 years, serving as the president for 3 years and the VP for 4. Mr. Bohn has served for 15 years, 8 months as the president and 2 years as the VP. They have both had a positive impact on the governance of the district.

Welcome to the new board members recently elected this past April, Joseph Sorrentino and John Farinella. We are sure they will be positive additions to the board of education, and we look forward to working with them for the betterment of our schools and students.



### **PANDEMIC GRANT**

The district is fortunate to have been identified as being eligible for a Planning for the Next Pandemic (PNP) Program Grant. The grant, which was approved in May, is for \$50,000: \$25,000 each for Grant School and the Middle School. The goal is for the district to be able to provide all students quality learning opportunities in the event of a school closing or excessive absences due to a Pandemic.

This includes the provision of the instructional program electronically on line from home. This will require a dramatic enhancement of the district website to enable us to keep parents and students abreast of school information, permit communication and collaboration between staff, parents and students by using blogs, podcasts, wikis, video casts, email exchanges and alerts, and any and all other intranet capabilities for internal sharing of information. Students with local cable T will have access to Power Point classroom video presentations, while those without Internet or cable TV could have assignments mailed home in the form of paper, CDs, DVDs and flash drives. Loaner laptops will be provided to those students to take advantage of these opportunities.

### **GOOD & WELFARE**

#### **Jim Pedersen**

The Board of Education congratulates our high school principal Jim Pedersen on earning his Ed.D degree in Educational Leadership from Seton Hall University. From now on we will be happy to call him "Dr." Pedersen.



.....LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS.....

**GRANT SCHOOL:**

**Leo Whalen, Principal**  
**Robert Richkus, Asst. Principal**

During the mid-winter months, eight Family Math Nights were held during the evening hours at Grant School. Family Math is a program for both parents and children to develop problem-solving skills and to build an understanding of mathematics with "hands-on" materials. Through the use of games and activities, individuals were encouraged to communicate, share, clarify and defend their understanding of math. Parents were given overviews of various mathematics topics and how they were being taught at their specific grade level. Parents who attended the class left with activities to encourage and further their child's math education at home. By working together in a non-threatening, fun environment, Family Math hopes to build the students' confidence and therefore create better problem-solvers.

During the spring months, eight Family Science Nights were held during the evening hours at Grant School. Family Science is an evening program of hands-on science activities that provides an opportunity for children and their parents to work together to conduct simple, inquiry-based, age-appropriate science activities.

During the month of February, the sixth grade classes participated in the NJ Mathematics League Contest. This test is designed to interest and challenge students in grade 6 in Math. The problems presented to students varied in level of difficulty from basic math to the most challenging problems. Grant School finished number 17 in the Top 31 Schools in the League--6<sup>th</sup> Grade (167 Schools) and finished number four in Middlesex County.

Several students from Grant School were among the nearly 150,000 students worldwide to participate this year in the Math Olympiad program. They participated in a series of five monthly contests of 5 problems each, from November to March, and practice sessions under the supervision and coaching of Mrs. Joanne Haus and Mrs. Kathy Wilson. They taught the children to solve unusual and difficult problems and to think creatively. A gold pin is awarded to those in at least the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile (top 2%). At Grant School, Scott Riccardi, with a score of 24 out of 25, was in this extraordinary group. A silver pin is awarded to those in the 90<sup>th</sup> to 97<sup>th</sup> percentiles, including the following students: Surindra Boodhoo, Liam Nagel

and Raj Patel.

The Grant School team was named to the National Meritorious Achievement List for its score of 178 points. The team must be in the 80<sup>th</sup> to 89<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally to win this award.

Congratulations to the Grant School Drama Club for a wonderful performance of "The King and I, Jr." on April 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Arriola and Mrs. Stasio worked with an entire cast of 75 students. Not only did our students have the opportunity to act, sing and dance but they also helped with sewing, painting, and creating beautiful crafts to transform our gym into a Broadway Stage.

Congratulations to following students chosen to perform in the Central Jersey Music Educator Association, Elementary Honors Band at Rahway Middle School on April 16th: Joshua Persad, Maricelys Inoa, Lindsay Soper, Chloe Wilson, Lailah Goldberg-Mota, Connor Wolpin, Ryan Berardi and Oliva O'Lerary. Congratulations to Mrs. Stasio for being chosen to conduct the Band.



**RILEY SCHOOL:**  
**Al Czech, Principal**

Throughout the 2010-11 school year the children of Riley School were actively involved in various fundraisers to help the community and national organizations to assist people around the world. This effort culminated in the 39 Minute Walk to Cure Breast Cancer, which has raised close to \$3,000 a year and involves the school and community.

Highlights of the year include the annual Halloween parade, the Kindergarten and Grade 1 Thanksgiving Feast, the Riley Gingerbread House Contest, the Mother/Son and Father/Daughter Dances, Grandparent's Day, Parents' Day and concerts performed by both the chorus and the grade 4 strings orchestra. The year will end with two major events: Field Day and Carnival Day.

.....LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS.....

Children from Riley School were also involved in a variety of competitions during the year in the areas of art and writing. Three children were recognized for their work by becoming Junior Journalists. They were awarded a town certificate and a \$25 bond. Twenty-three special needs students were recognized by the local Elks for their participation in the Annual Elks Poster Contest. They were honored as both district and state winners in a ceremony at the South Plainfield Lodge.

**KENNEDY SCHOOL:**  
**Lisa Parker, Principal**

This was our first year using **Study Island** to reinforce math and literacy skills. This is a web-based supplemental instruction which is built to address state standards in language arts and math.

**Being a Writer** is a language arts program used by all K-4 teachers which has resulted in an improvement in the students overall writing skills. This program is used to reinforce NJ ASK proficiencies and we hope to see positive growth in our 2011 NJ ASK scores.

Character Education is also emphasized in all our elementary schools to help our students develop into kind and caring individuals with a strong set of values. Our children participated in a variety of events in this regard, including: Grandparents Day, Veterans' Day Essay Contest, essay contest sponsored by Senator Barbara Buono, the St. Jude Math-a-thon, Valentines for Vets, Go-Red for American Heart Association, Caps for Kids Fund-raiser to Support Children with Cancer, UNICEF, Mother's Day Essay Contest, Earth Day Celebrations, food and toy contributions to Middlesex County, programs celebrating historic events, Clean Communities, Pennies for Patients, Safety Patrol, Family Breakfast, Crossing Guard Tea, PTSO Tea Party, Jump Rope for Heart, Walk for Breast Cancer 39 Minute Walk, and M.C. Foods- Collected food for the Middlesex County's Emergency Food Network

Our elementary schools continue to foster intellectual growth, meaningful social programs, and creative arts.

**Notable Accomplishments:**

- History of South Plainfield Essay Winner David Jaipersaud
- Junior Journalist \$50 Savings Bond Winners sponsored by *The Observer*

- Hometown Heroes were Sarah Gwiazda and Joseph Sacco.
- Javon Tompkins was one of the First place winners in District for the Elks Poster Contest and Laquan Kalman won 3<sup>rd</sup> in State.
- Lynda Farinella, Sara Gwiazda, Taylor Santamaria and Jacob Rivera were inducted into Elementary Honors Orchestra.

Congratulations to all who have been recognized for their achievements.

**ROOSEVELT SCHOOL:**  
**Bob Diehl, Principal**

Roosevelt School continues to provide an excellent well-rounded educational experience for all our students. Along with strong academic instruction, Roosevelt offers a variety of courses and activities designed to prepare our students for success in the world in which we live.

Our school provided a number of supplemental programs to help our students do their best on their state assessment tests, including the NJ ASK Prep Club and Family Math program.



Our LAMP (Language, Art, Music Program) provided enrichment activities for over forty third and fourth grade students this year. This program is designed to offer creative and expressive experiences to students who have demonstrated aptitude in language arts, art, and music.

.....LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS.....

The Roosevelt School Music Department provided weekly music classes for all students. Third and fourth grade students were offered instruction and performance opportunities in Band, Orchestra and Chorus.

The entire student body and staff were involved in several special events and activities ranging from our Halloween Parade and Celebration to our Fourth Grade Promotion Ceremony. Multi-Cultural Day attracted many parents and community members as the entire school danced, sang and created artwork representing different countries around the world. We were able to successfully present our annual Veterans Day Program, Winter Concert, Spring Concert and Grandparents Day. Our students were also treated to a visit by Margery Cuyler, author of over thirty children's books, and the NJEA Cat in The Hat.

To help enhance our school climate and promote character education, twenty-one fourth grade students were selected for Peer Mediation Training. These students volunteered their recess time to help students and resolve conflicts throughout the year.

Our Student Council remained very active by conducting three highly profitable fundraisers. Money was raised for cancer, our community, and the environment. The student council representatives also initiated several spirit days and helped with various projects throughout the year. The Roosevelt School Safety Patrol was once again instrumental in demonstrating leadership and helping with student traffic.

This year, as in the past, many Roosevelt students participated in one or more writing contests. The annual Junior Journalist Contest sponsored by Hometown Heroes and The South Plainfield Observer gives students the opportunity to become published authors and win a meal for their family. One of our students won a \$ 75 bond from TD BANK and two of our students have won the Ruth Kurland Memorial Award, a \$1,000 savings bond.

We are thankful for the efforts and generosity of our PTO who did an excellent job making the school experience for our children the best it can be.

Other newsworthy initiatives during the 2010-11 school year include, Blowing Bubbles for Autism Awareness Fundraiser, Multicultural Day, "Read Across America" March 2, PTO Sponsored Recycling Assembly, PTO Sponsored "Captain Super-

tooth" Assembly-Dental Hygiene and Awareness. Anjali Blow was the "What My State Means to Me" District Contest Winner, and we had 9 Junior Journalist Winners. Over 30 students participated in our Peer Mediation program.



**FRANKLIN SCHOOL:**  
**Ellen Decker-Lorys, Principal**

At Franklin School we believe all children have special gifts and talents, and will learn in a nurturing environment that celebrates their individuality. By discovering their talents, learning to formulate goals, working hard and doing their best in every endeavor, our children will set the foundation that will empower them to make their dreams come true!

We continue to work diligently to help our children prepare for the NJ State Assessments in math and language arts through our instructional programs, extra help, professional development programs, and ongoing communication with parents.

Numerous opportunities for students to learn outside the school day are provided through AM and PM programs such as Basic Skills Instruction, NJASK 3 and 4 Preparation, Family Math, Language Arts Literacy Night, LAMP, Student Council, Chorus and Orchestra. We encourage our students to embrace learning by placing emphasis on math skills and problem-solving strategies, learning and speaking skills, writing rubrics and portfolios, utilizing computers to enhance instruction and learning, and numerous cultural arts presentations sponsored by our PTO.

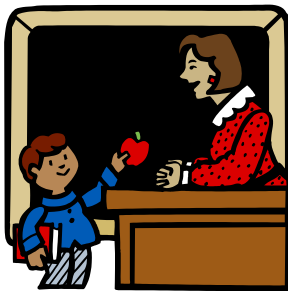
Character Education is emphasized to help our students develop into kind and caring individuals with a strong set of values. Our children participate in our Veterans' Day Essay Contest, Senator Barbara Buono's "What New Jersey Means to Me" essay contest, the St. Jude Math-a-thon, Mother's Day Essay Contest, Earth Day Celebrations, M.C. Foods Collection, programs celebrating historic events, campus clean-ups, Safety Patrol, the Lenahan Family Breakfast, and the Parent Appreciation Breakfast.

.....LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS.....

To help develop their skills in expression students participate in morning announcements, campaign speeches, power point presentations, word processing, creative and artistic use of computer software, the Winter Concert, the Spring Concert, writing assignments, poetry, essay, and art contests, artwork and displays, and science and social studies displays and demonstrations. This year one of our students was a winner in the "Roots of South Plainfield" essay contest.

Developing sound bodies and appreciation of personal responsibility in maintaining good health are emphasized by Dental Care Month, aerobics, strength development, healthy snack choices, Fun and Fitness Day, Jump Rope for Heart, and kick-ball.

Upcoming events in June include an Author Visit, Class Trips, Beach Party, and the PTO sponsored End of Year Celebration for all of our students.



**Middle School:  
Kevin Hajduk, Principal  
Tamekia Grier, Assistant Principal**

On March 10, 2011, one of our beloved cafeteria workers, Mrs. Carol Bucchignano, passed away. The students and staff of the Middle School will always remember "Mrs. Carol" for her positive spirit and for loving the students for their respectful nature. She will truly always have a special place in the hearts of all individuals that knew her. We miss you Mrs. Carol!

In March the South Plainfield Middle School Math Department participated in a food drive as part of a shared endeavor with the Middlesex County Food Organization and Outreach Distribution Services. A "Pi-Day" celebration and competition was held where teachers rallied their students to collect as many cans as possible. In total, the department successfully collected over 3000 cans.

On Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> twenty-four students spent over three hours cleaning the Middle School campus, including its courtyard and pond. As members of the Student Council and Peer to Peer Program these students planted flowers, weeded the area around the pond and 9/11 Monument, and cleaned up trash around the building. The courtyard and entrance way to building look great.

**Washington D.C./Baltimore, MD Trip**

After months of planning, 206 grade 8 students will travel to Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, MD to observe the components of the nation's capital first hand. The three day trip was initiated 25 years ago as a way for students to apply what they learn in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade History class into an experience that promotes patriotism and pride.. During the trip the students observe museums, monuments, and historical documents that leave a lasting impression of the country's rich history. This year's group will also have the opportunity to peruse Baltimore's Inner Harbor and the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. Thank you to Mr. Blondo and Mrs. Tierney for their countless hours of dedication towards making this trip a huge success.

**SPMS Battle of the Books**

The SPMS Battle of the Books Final Competition held on Friday, April 15 was the culmination of year-long competitions beginning in the students' Reading classes. Two teams tied for first place with perfect scores. The students did a terrific job. The winning team and top seventh grade team members are Katherine Dolinski, Emily Sukenik, Rebecca Ng, Emma Regan and Anna Williams. Jennifer Teece, Kasey Walsh, Melanie Cheng, Rebecca Armand, Chelsea Housel and Hayley Dow made up the top eighth grade team. On Friday, May 13, 2011 these teams participated in the annual Battle of the Books regional competition at Manalapan-Englishtown Middle School competing against other seventh and eighth grade teams in the area.

The SPMS PTO has been very generous in supporting this program.

## ***SOUTH PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS***

.....LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS.....

### **SOUTH PLAINFIELD HIGH SCHOOL:**

**Dr. Jim Pedersen, Principal**

**Joseph Cirigliano, Ralph Errico & Kelly Richkus, Assistant Principals**



#### **National French Contest:**

Matthew McCue, sophomore at South Plainfield High School, is a winner of the National French Contest: a nationwide contest that is sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French every year. Angelica Magpile is also in the top five as a winner of the NJ Chapter of the National French Contest.



#### **National Honor Society– Advisors Mr. David Knarr & Ms. Maria Leonardis**

The National Honor Society ran a book drive over two weeks, that raised over 5,000 books to help build libraries in schools in Uganda and other third world countries.

#### **World Language Department - Team Leader Jackie Barton:**

- Dec. 2010 Spanish and Art students trip to Museo Del Barrio (NYC) Toured Voces y Visiones exhibit, print-making activity, and lunch at El Paso Taqueria (Barton/Danella/Cassano).
- Spanish Honor members provided tutoring each Thursday before school and after school.
- Spanish Honor Society members(Emily Sella, Casey Butrico, and Nelli Selim) provided tutoring to Riley students after school.

#### **Music Department: Roger Vroom; Bruce Mikolon; Tracey Murray**

In December sophomore Richard Duong auditioned for and was accepted into the CJMEA (Central Jersey Music Educators Association) Percussion Ensemble. Their concert was in February.

#### **Magic Kingdom performance:**

Members of the High School orchestra will be performing in Disneyworld at 4:00 pm on Saturday, May 28th. The Marching band will be marching in the Magic Kingdom on May 29 at 10:00 am.

#### **Published Works:**

Under the direction of English teacher Alicia Pecora several students (Glenn Edridge, Erin O'Connor, Tara Dunn and former student Jared Czech) had their work published in competitive creative writing magazines such as *Teen Ink* and *The Apprentice Writer*, and one student (Olivia Butler) was published on *Poetsonline.org*, an online site. Daria Approvato was honored by the New Jersey Council of Teachers of English for a piece she wrote. Students also attended the Dodge Poetry Festival earlier in the year.

#### **Edison Rotary Club:**

The Edison Rotary Club has been hosting an annual Senior of the Month breakfast and Senior of the Year Scholarship dinner for 15 years. They have honored more than 1,300 high school seniors as they transition beyond high school into college and careers. These special young adults contribute their services in every aspect of life. They volunteer at schools, day cares, synagogues, churches, mosques, hospitals, doctor's offices, libraries, shelters, and a slew of other locations. They create innovative approaches to old problems by pursuing their passions for the benefit of others. This year's Rotary Seniors of the Month were Alyssa Aiello, Rachel Alexa, Carly Ashnault, Ryan Billich, Jayme Bishop, Amanda Calvi, Chelsey Colucci, Angela DeSantis, Connor Gillis, Michelle Hernandez, Charlie Huber, Riley Hubner, Randy Jakubik, Brigitte Kelly, Nicholas Okokso, Kyle Pompilio, Richard Rotella, Danielle Schaaf, Edward Sullivan, and Ellen Zinsky.

This year's Senior of the Year Scholarship was awarded to Amanda Calvi on May 12, 2011 at The Pines Manor.

## **MORE HIGH SCHOOL NEWS**

### **Tiger 24**

April 30, 2011 marked the SPHS Student Leadership organization's eighth annual Tiger 24. This annual event was directed by teachers Marla Vandermark and Anthony Encinas this year. It is orchestrated by the students of SPHS in cooperation with the SODEXO Corporation and the Athletic Boosters of South Plainfield. Since its inception this event has raised well over \$60,000 that has been used to significantly and positively impact many deserving members of the South Plainfield community during times of crisis and loss.

### **SPHS Information Center: Pat Massey**

Pat Massey has been nominated by Norma Blake, New Jersey State Librarian, to serve as the only school library media specialist on the New Jersey Library Network Review Board that monitors the programs of the New Jersey Library Network.

### **World Language Department**

Mr. Delne, High School French Teacher, and Mr. Perero, High School Spanish teacher, took groups of students to Spain and France during the Spring Break recess. They spent 8 days visiting historical landmarks such as the "Palace of Versailles" in France and the "Sacred Family" in Barcelona, Spain. It was an extraordinary 8 days spent in Paris and Barcelona as students immersed themselves in the language they've been studying.

### **National French Contest:**

Matthew McCue, a sophomore at South Plainfield High School, is a winner of the 2010-11 National French Contest award sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French. Angelica Magpile is also in the top five as a winner of the NJ Chapter of the National French Contest.

### **Top 10 video by the Graphics Department:**

SPHS was voted as having produced one of the top ten videos by Panasonic. Go to the following site to view :

[http://www.panasonic.com/MECA/kwn/2011\\_winners.asp](http://www.panasonic.com/MECA/kwn/2011_winners.asp)



## ***Have a Great Summer***

***First Day of School for Staff - Thursday, Sept. 1, 2011***

***First Day of School for Students - Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2011***

### ***Back-to-School Nights (2011-12)***

***High School - Tuesday, Sept. 27***

***Middle School - Thursday, Sept. 15***

***Grant School - Thursday, Sept. 22***

***Roosevelt School - Tuesday, Sept. 13***

***Riley School - Monday, Sept. 12***

***Kennedy School - Tuesday, Sept. 20***

***Franklin School - Monday, Sept. 19***

