

# May 2009 New Milford High School Monthly Report

Compiled by Eric Sheninger

## 1. Observations

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Observed by</u>
Melanie Siliato	Guidance	5/5/09	3	Eric Sheninger
Marie Lukas	Culinary Arts	5/7/09	2	Eric Sheninger

Summaries:

## 2. Guest lecturers

- On May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Bob Rothstein presented his work and ran a hands-on workshop with Ms. Morel's art classes. Bob Rothstein is a visual artist who paints and collages. The objective was to expose her students to a real life artist, his concepts, art processes and techniques. Prior to his arrival Ms. Morel introduced the media collage, which consists of cutting and pasting paper together, focusing on shapes and color, to create an image. On day of the workshop, Mr. Rothstein introduced his art process and exhibited his work as examples. He then demonstrated his process to each of the classes, like how he tears his paper instead of cutting with scissors and how he prepares and organizes his materials. After his demo, the classes were prompted to create collages of their own utilizing his techniques. As the students worked both Mr. Rothstein and Ms. Morel circulated to help students.
- On May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009, the Social Studies department hosted five veterans who recalled their experiences in the military as a part of a special annual program NMHS holds each year before Memorial Day. The guest speakers were New Milford resident Rich Schimel (Army Ranger in Vietnam), Rich Musicant (Persian Gulf War of 1990), Charlie Sauer (World War II), Robert Chester (Korean War), and NMHS alumnus Rich Nacliero (Iraq).

## 3. Innovations:

- On Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the combined tenth grade Honors English classes of Mrs. Rose De Poto and student teacher Christina McCann concluded their study of the The Great Gatsby with a Roaring 20's Party in the Old Gym from 12:30-3 p.m. Students came costumed as flappers, gangsters, baseball and film star celebrities who showcased their extensive research on the 1920's with table displays, dance lessons, and a fashion show. Fifty students participated in the event and over 100 students from other academic classes were invited, as well as parents of the Honors students, administrators, and faculty. The eight table displays were: "The Speakeasy," featuring vices of the era, "The Gallery," featuring art, architecture, painting, music, and literature of the period, "The Globe," featuring major world events of the 20's, "The General Store," highlighting gadgets and inventions of the period, "The Restaurant and Marketplace," featuring homemade foods of the period, "The Roaring 20's," featuring flappers and their hobbies, "Famous People of the 20's," highlighting the big names in film, theatre, music, etc., and "High Couture of the 20's," featuring the makeup, clothing and hairstyles of the times. Perhaps the most popular events of the Party were the Charleston lessons for all who volunteered, and the fashion show which featured the honors students in their individual costumes which were created or purchased by the students themselves. One student guest remarked, "We should have something like this every week!" The Honors students themselves were very pleased with the affair and hope to do more of this type of activity, which synthesizes the various disciplines around the study of a particular work of literature. As Mrs. De Poto remarked. "Students see the book

they are reading within a context that makes it more understandable and hopefully more appreciated.”

- Mr. Devereaux and Mrs. Vicari have collaborated on a lesson for all freshman taking computer applications. Students will be using forensic measurements and strategies to solve a fictional crime. Students will be practicing various skills learned in science, and collecting data that will be placed into a Microsoft Access database. The lesson is designed to show the interdependence between science and technology, particularly when it comes to problem solving.
- What is the probability of A.P. Calculus students spending time working with students in an Algebra 1A class? According to Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Burten, it is 100 percent! Amanda Pennino and Kim Serra have been working with Mrs. Burten’s first period class to conquer the mathematics of Probability. Dice have been rolling, spinners spinning and the combinations of groups change daily. Amanda and Kim have done an excellent job working and motivating the students. This interdepartmental cooperative learning experience has been equally rewarding for the two advanced students, as well as the algebra students. Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Burten have been working throughout the year planning how to best utilize peer mentoring in mathematics. Amanda and Kim are modeling not only the algebraic and mathematical components, but also illustrate a great example of New Milford’s student enthusiasm. Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Burten are already planning to continue this working relationship, next year. No math phobias allowed!
- On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the Opening Knights and International Thespian Society presented the second annual Spring Playwriting Competition at Jim Africano Auditorium. Three students wrote, performed, produced, and directed plays that were presented for an enthusiastic audience of parents, family, and friends. First place prize, included a gift card worth \$100 and went to sophomore Jessica Milne; Second Prize (\$50) went to senior Chichi Ezeofor and Third Prize (\$25) went to Senior Shawn Theodore. Shawn and Jessica were previous playwright participants. The evening was hosted by Joe Soto and sparked with musical performances by Joe, Bernardo Jiminez, P.J. Matthews and the band Viking Viking Viking. The evening also featured another student-written play performed out of competition and directed by junior Melissa Milne.
- In an idea brought forth by Ms. Schlamp’s very own class members themselves, on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the Humanities class hosted their first ever International Food Exchange! All year, since such an emphasis had been put on the students’ own personal cultural identities through bi-monthly oral presentations, the students decided they wanted to finish the year off celebrating it all—a celebration that would both highlight and embrace their different nationalities. And what better way than *food*? Each student brought in a recipe card from his own cultural/ethnic background. After the class selected the recipes, making sure there weren’t too many duplicates, they each agreed to make their assigned dish from their own heritage. In a year spent studying the literature, art and music of people all around the world, it was time to feel like we were actually *in* those places. So from the Philippines, Romania, Bosnia, Russia, the Dominican Republic, Israel, Germany, Colombia to Ireland (and that wasn’t even everybody!) we came, we cooked, we danced and boy did we eat!!! Administration and faculty members were invited to partake in the event. It was a rousing success!



#### 4. Student honors:

- A certificate of excellence was granted on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009, to freshman Anna Boyadjian as the first Armenian Youth Talent Finalist. Anna performed in Carnegie Hall on the cello.
- On May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009, New Milford High School officially established its chapter of the International Thespian Society. Thespian Troupe 7410 inducted twenty students who participate in a wide variety of theatre arts programming at NMHS ranging from on stage performance to back stage support. Troupe Director John Coviello and troupe Advisor Kerr Lockhart were proud to welcome Anthony Crouchelli, Matt Kaprielian, Kelly Novak, Melissa Milne, Jessica Milne, Andrew Bridge, Megan Kiely, Kasandra Appice, Emily Riehle, Bernardo Jimenez, Shawn Theodore, Leonard Perez, Ariel Pasquale, Mary Costa, Monica Eguia, Alyssa Balderama, Jason Korzelius, Jimmy Ordonez, Jennilyn Robles, and Justin Munier into this international, performance-based honor society that has chapters in every state of the union, and all over the world, such as London, England and Cairo, Egypt. They join the ranks of many other greats such as John Goodman and Tom Hanks, who after high school graduation have graced our screens and stages as professional entertainers. Troupe Associate Heidi Kolb from the DEO Middle School helped to make the night a complete success and she plans to start a Junior Thespian Troupe next year! Congratulations Thespians!
- The NMHS spring musical, WORKING, has received ten nominations for awards! Papermill Play House has nominated the musical for four awards. Azela Zarate and Lijin Joy have been nominated for Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role, George Milne for Outstanding Lighting Achievement, and Hayley Barton for Outstanding Achievement in Lobby Display. The Paper Mill Play House Awards ceremony will take place on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009, at Paper Mill Play House. The Helen Hayes High School Theatre Awards have nominated Working for six awards: Outstanding Overall Production, Outstanding Production Number - "All the Live Long Day," Outstanding Duet - Sarah Torpie and Lijin Joy "Office S," Outstanding Lobby Display - Hayley Barton, Outstanding Direction - Alexander Diaz, and Outstanding Musical Direction - Kerr Lockhart! The Helen Hayes Awards ceremony will take place on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009, at the Paramount Center for the Arts in Peekskill, NY. The cast will perform a musical number at the Helen Hayes awards on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009, for hundreds of other students from New York and New Jersey. Break a leg everyone!

- On Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009, ten students were inducted into the National French Honor Society. Students prepared French desserts for the reception. A bilingual version of "On My Own" from "les Miserables" was sung by Michelle Franco, Alyssa Balderama and Genee Umali. Jennilyn Robles accompanied them on the piano. Paul Robalino, the guest speaker, was awarded a medal of excellence for his accomplishments in French. He spoke to the students about the need to challenge themselves in school and congratulated the native speakers of Spanish on their decision to learn French. When introducing Paul, Mrs. Monroe mentioned the fact that Ivy League schools ask to provide concrete examples of a student's sincere interest in learning. As Paul said, instead of going for an "easy A" by enrolling in a class in which you already speak the language fluently, you should choose to study another language. Paul had previously related how much the Harvard interviewer had been positively impressed by the fact that he, as a native speaker of Spanish and President of the French Honor Society, had worked so diligently last year to save the French program in New Milford. Harvard and Princeton Universities also accepted Paul, who attends Yale University. He has been awarded a scholarship by Yale to live with a French family and study in Paris this summer; he left on Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Mr. Sheninger congratulated the students on their zeal to learn another language, and awarded certificates of membership to the following students: Alyssa Balderama, Anna Boyadjian, Disha Dass, Jennifer Etoile, Amanda Howell, Ricardo Montero-Hernandez, Gideon Luzares, Meeti Purini, Jennilyn Robles, and Jennifer Ramos.

## 5. Field trips

- On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009, students from Mr. Wilson's Economics class traveled to the Financial District in NYC. They were provided a walking tour by Adam Leitman Bailey, New Milford alumnus and prominent real estate attorney. Mr. Bailey spoke about money--its power, need and relations to making New York and the United States great and now on the precipice of disaster. He also discussed the American history of money and how our free market system allowed many people to realize their personal and financial dreams. Mr. Bailey began his discussion in the 1600s with the first trading--students visited the exact spot--and moved to the 1800s where he discussed Rockefeller. Students visited the Financial Museum and even got on the floor of the Stock Exchange. They learned how money was created, how it is used, the vehicles of taking large amounts of money and packaging it together and creating the massive wealth of the new milenium. Additionally, they gained knowledge on what is stock and how does it allow companies to become bigger. Finally the group discussed the current crisis, real estate's roll, lessons on how to start saving money, and good personal financial advice.
- On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Mr. Lockhart, along with Mr. Jacob and Ms. Mackey, took forty-six freshman English students to Lincoln Center to attend a program on competitive performance poetry, known as "Slam." Part of the Lincoln Center Meet-The-Artists program and entitled "Verbal Combat: Slam 101" the show playfully pitted three experienced and published slam poets in a one-hour program of verbal dexterity, expressiveness and entertainment. Students participated in scoring each poem performed on a scale from one to ten, as is done in an actual tournament environment. During several "breakdowns" in the show, the poets explained their techniques and influences and then required the students to write their own poems, lists or freewrites. The show was a vivid demonstration that poetry is not a musty art from the distant past, but alive, vibrant, coming from the streets and neighborhoods of America today. Several students completed poems of their own which they gave either to the teachers or submitted to Meet-The-Artists for publication. Prior to the program, students were given

a tour of the Lincoln Center campus, including the Vivian Beaumont Theater where *South Pacific* is now playing and the David H. Koch Theater, home of the New York City Ballet. The poetry performance was given on the campus of Juilliard School of Music and the Performing Arts.

## 6. Guidance

- On Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the staff of New Milford High School will gather with students, families, and members of the community to celebrate the eighth annual Senior Awards Night. Recognition, award, and scholarship recipients will be announced during the banquet. The valedictorian and salutatorian of the class of 2009 will be honored with plaques presented by the New Milford/Teaneck Elks Club. More than fifty individual scholarships will be awarded to members of the graduating class of 2009, including recognition of the "Top Ten Graduates". In addition, special recognition awards, the Departmental Awards, and the Edward J. Bloustein Distinguished Scholars Award will be presented.
- On Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the Guidance Department had the opportunity to escort a group of students to a special reception at the New Milford Women's Club. The Women's Club sponsors NMHS students annually to attend the HOBY seminar and Girl's Career Institute. They also provide scholarships to outstanding students in the areas of music and art. The reception provided the opportunity for the Women's Club to get to know these students and the students the opportunity to thank the Women's Club for their generosity.

## 7. Professional Development

- On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Mr. Sheninger, Mr. Tusa, and Dr. Asa-Awuku participated in the Northern New Jersey Turnaround Leadership Network at Montclair State University presented by Dr. Tracey Severns. The Turnaround Leadership Professional Learning Community Network is a professional development initiative to create collegial networks for school leaders across the state. The initiative fosters the abilities of educational leaders by providing opportunities to enhance and hone leadership skills. Through an established partnership with Montclair State University (Northern Region), The College of New Jersey (Central Region), and Rowan University (Southern Region), the network will work to assist new and veteran educational leaders, as well as those in schools in years three to five of NCLB corrective action status. This particular seminar focused on Professional Learning Communities (PLC's). PLC's are seen as a powerful staff development approach and a potent strategy for school change and improvement. The goals of the PLC Network are to:
  - Promote a vision of leadership which supports teaching and learning
  - Create professional learning communities among school leaders in support of their Professional Growth Plans
  - Provide support to leaders in exercising their role as change agents within learning environments
  - Establish a foundation for distributed leadership
  - Create collaborative partnerships between college partners and school leaders within regions to promote trusted professional development relationships
  - Identify critical research and effective practices to improve school leaders' knowledge of systemic change.
- On May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Ms. O'Donnell completed a Pediatric Advance Life Support Certification Renewal course at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Paterson N.J. On May

28<sup>th</sup>, 2009, she completed Updates in Pediatrics III at Hackensack University Medical Center.

## 8. Facilities

- On May 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009, students involved in the Community Service and Environmental clubs worked tirelessly to construct a pond less waterfall in an effort to beautify the NMHS courtyard and add to the existing plant life in the school ecosystem. All materials, equipment, and landscaping were donated by NMHS alumnus Pieter van Westervelt of Premium Aquascapes and Kodiak Tree Express. Mr. van Westervelt also supervised the entire project from start to finish.

## 9. Other

- On Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Mr. Sheninger met with school leaders from the Ridgewood, Mahwah, Ramsey, Tenafly, Westwood, Allendale, and Ramapo/Indian Hills school districts and spoke about New Milford's involvement in Project ABLE (<http://www.themadisoninstitute.com/TMI-project-able-learning-initiative.asp>). He discussed how New Milford has been involved in this project since its inception and stressed the importance of authentic-based learning environments and fostering 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning skills. The overall purpose of this meeting was to garner support from local districts for creating a Bergen County ABLE Consortium of schools in order to promote the objectives of the ABLE initiative and collaborate with each other to further engage and prepare our students for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century society.
- The New Milford High School and DEO Middle School drama societies have teamed up to create the New Milford Schools Theater Association. This organization is dedicated to fostering the development of new theatre arts programming at both schools, building articulations between schools, and supporting productions at both schools. NMHS students have already participated in supporting the Middle School spring musical. A website is under development and can be found at [www.freewebs.com/NMSTA](http://www.freewebs.com/NMSTA). The first official activity of the NMSTA will be production of the first-ever New Milford Summer Musical, LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS, to be presented July 30<sup>th</sup>, July 31<sup>st</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 at Jim Africano Auditorium at New Milford High School. The comedy-horror musical will be directed by John Coviello, assisted by Melissa Milne and Disha Dass, produced by Melissa Milne and other students, designed by Matt Kaprielian and music directed by Kerr Lockhart, assisted by Leonard Perez, with overall production support by Heidi Kolb. The very existence of this production is due entirely to the enthusiasm, energy and organization of a group of students who also form the core of Troupe 7410. They have already begun the extensive fundraising necessary for such an ambitious project, so if you see drama students selling bracelets or program ads or just doing a can shake in front of your favorite merchants on a weekend, please give them your support!
- New Milford High School participated in the 2009 Ethics Bowl and Symposium that was held on Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Stevens Institute of Technology and attended by twenty schools from the states of New York and New Jersey. Participation in the Ethics Bowl and Symposium helps students improve their thinking abilities as well as their understanding and commitment to contemporary ethical issues. Students debated ethical and moral issues associated our modern society as well as those posed by contemporary science and technology. This year's topics included:
  - The Federal Bailout of AIG
  - Enhancement Drugs in Sports
  - Prescribing Drugs to Improve Children's Behavior
  - Social Networks on the Internet.

New Milford engaged Dobbs Ferry high school in a hotly contested debate. After the debate, the judges admitted that they found it difficult to declare a winner but ultimately decided in favor of Dobbs Ferry after some lengthy deliberation.

- The HS band was very active this month. They performed at the Palisades Mall in West Nyack NY on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009. An appreciative crowd gathered and enjoyed the music. The Spring concert on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009, included a variety of groups that combined strings, band, and vocals together for several contemporary selections. A drum duet was also enjoyed. Soloists included seniors Jonell Robles and Virginia Ameralis, underclassmen Nick Novak, Kenny Van Sadlers and Lani-Mae Lim. On Memorial Day the band marched as part of the line-up. The town showed a large gathering on many of the street corners throughout the whole route to cheer the band on.
- On the May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the band attended the Bergen Teen Arts Festival at Bergen Community College for a critique. The day is filled with activities as well as a chance to interact with students from many other schools in the county. It is considered the best festival of its kind in the state.
- Congratulations to the Boys Tennis team on winning the first ever tennis NJSIAA Sectional Championship at NMHS. The team convincingly defeated Verona 4-1 in the Group I-North I Sectional Finals to achieve this goal. The team then went on to defeat Point Pleasant Beach in the State Semifinals, 3-2. The boys lost to a powerful Jonathan Dayton team in the finals, completing the season as the Group I State Runner-up. Overall, the team completed the season with a record of twenty wins and only three losses.
- This Spring Track season, A.J. Scoppa set a new school record in the 200m (22.3sec.) and tied the school record in the 100m (10.9 sec.). A.J. also won the Bergen County Group C championship in the 200m and the Group I Sectional championship in the 100m. Ali Metwali also won the Group C Bergen County championship in the Javelin. In addition, A.J., Ali, Chris Colasurdo and John Follety qualified for the State Group Championship in South Plainfield on May 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009.
- Seniors Ashley Vargas and Chris Colasurdo represented NMHS by attending the BCSL Olympic/National Divisions Sportsmanship Luncheon on May 27, 2009, at the Chart House in Weehawken, NJ.
- On May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Mrs. Bettini spent the morning mentoring Thomas Cirone, a high school art teacher from Fort Lee. She shared her experiences teaching AP studio Art, Drawing, 2-D Design and AP-3D-Design. Fort Lee does not offer these courses as yet. They discussed the curriculum, the AP test, and digital submission.
- Mrs. Keesing and Mr. Devereaux created a step-by-step guide to assist the faculty in using the Mac laptops and iPods for project-based learning tasks. They hope that the guide will provide a comfort level for teachers in using this technology.
- Mrs. Monroe again judged the oral French contest for the Foreign Language Educators of New Jersey Association (FLENJ). Results were reported and announced at the annual meeting in April.