

THE QUINCY EDUCATOR

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Winter 2006

Full-day kindergarten provides more time for learning

BY GRETCHEN WEBER

In January, Mary Dunn's full-day kindergarten class at the Marshall School celebrated the Chinese New Year by making a papier-maché dragon's head together as a

class and then traveling throughout the school to show off their creation. Before that, the students read the book *Stone Soup* as a class, and they worked with one another to construct a large papier-maché "soup pot" and all the various vegetables that went into their "soup."

These kinds of hands-on, cross-curricula activities are exactly what full-day kindergarten allows teachers to do, said Dunn, who has

taught both full-day and half-day kindergarten. Having students a full day

"With a full day, teachers have the flexibility to have a real hands-on approach to learning, which is so important for students at this age."

Mary Dunn
teacher

See **FULL-DAY** Page 10

Clockwise from left, Tim Schow, Vincent Wong, James Keith and James Yu work on a robot at Quincy High School.



Quincy students are HYPER about robots

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

The bottom floor of Quincy High School is a world of its own, with Nerf balls flying from one end to another, robots climbing up ramps and students intensely involved in brainstorming, designing, prototyping, building and

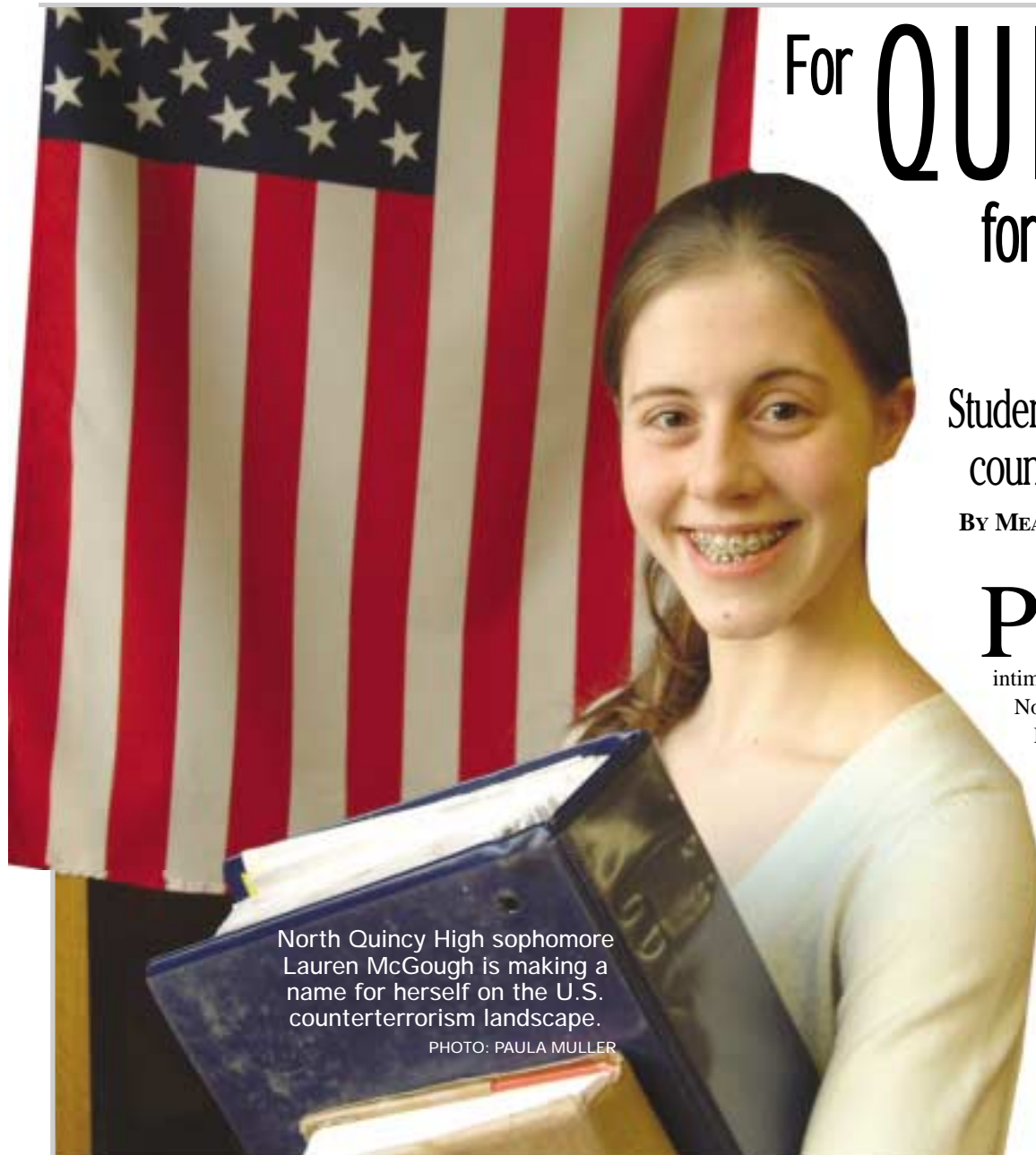
testing their creations.

In existence since 1996, the Quincy robotics team, HYPER, is made up of students from both Quincy High and North Quincy High. The students worked to transform the QHS basement into their own robotics lab, complete with machinery, computers and a driving field.

A perfect setting for pre-engineering minds, team members dedicate hours after-school and on weekends coming up with new designs and strategies to outmatch their competition.

"Some kids put in hundreds of hours, upwards of 30 hours a week," said

See **ROBOTS** Page 10



North Quincy High sophomore Lauren McGough is making a name for herself on the U.S. counterterrorism landscape.

PHOTO: PAULA MULLER

For QUINCY, for U.S.

Student known as national counterterrorism expert

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Presenting in front of a group of 20 renowned international researchers would be an intimidating task at any age, but North Quincy High sophomore Lauren McGough was up for the challenge. "At first I was a little nervous," said McGough, "but I was well prepared."

McGough was invited to speak at the Second Conference on Mathematical Methods in Counterterrorism, held at Benedict College in Columbia, S.C., in November. Her topic,

See **McGOUGH** Page 10

insidethe
inaugural edition



Music man
Blindness can't hold back
seventh-grader.

PAGE 3



Double vision
First-grade class up to
its ears in twins.

PAGE 5



At your service
Students learn value
of helping out city.

PAGES 6-7

From the Superintendent

The Quincy Educator takes you inside our classrooms



Dr. Richard DeCristofaro

Welcome to the first edition of the Quincy Educator! This publication will highlight our unique students, as well as share the accounts of many wonderful educational opportunities. In the Quincy Public Schools our academic, remedial and enrichment opportunities are planned within our process for continuous improvement, through the use of our District Improvement Plan.

The success of this plan, and ultimately the level of achievement of our students and school community, is based upon the collaborative

strength of our invaluable staff and administrators. We know that we will achieve more interdependently, rather than independently. In the words of Helen Keller, "Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much."

Excellent school systems must embrace change in order to meet student needs in this ever changing world. The Quincy Public Schools offers a vision that is reflective of managing the change necessary to maintain and improve an educational organization. This vision is shared within our District Improvement Plan as it offers our school system and learning community cohesive and unified goals.

Teamwork is the foundation upon which all of our students grow and learn. It is also the force

which allows us to maintain a focus on student achievement.

Our school system makes decisions together. Those who will be impacted by a decision are invited to be a part of that decision. Our system is organized around 72 teams that routinely examine and assess the many aspects of what we do. These teams are comprised of teachers, department heads, parents, counselors, nurses, directors, principals, custodians, administrators, our Mayor, School Committee and many other professional and paraprofessional staff. Their task is to identify areas in need of improvement, establish goals and work within a process of managed change that includes planning, implementing and assessing. The Quincy School Committee agenda serves as a forum for

sharing many elements of the District Improvement Plan, such as specific team reports, curriculum initiatives, budget building and review, professional development, student achievement, program and site assessments and school improvement plans. Our plan acknowledges this school system's need to work together, as well as our responsibility to constantly assess and be accountable for the success of our students and the growth of our community.

As you read this first edition, be reminded of our pride in each of our students, staff and administrators. Know, as well, how much we value the leadership of a Mayor who is focused on educational excellence, and the unwavering support of our Quincy School Committee.

Air Quality

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"The kids do a bulk of the production, but we'll go over and give them technical assistance with the equipment."

Jonathan Caliri
Quincy Access Television

Broadcasting class is a first-rate production

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Lights ... camera ... action. These three words are shaping the lives and future careers of students in John Green's broadcasting class at Quincy High School, and uniting the district in a shared appreciation of the happenings of the Quincy Public Schools.

Airing at 7:45 a.m. in every school homeroom and in residents' homes across the city on Quincy Access Television, the daily production features announcements, school news, highlights of athletic events and profiles of teachers, students and activities.

The program, produced by Quincy High seniors, is replayed each night at 5 p.m. Students in the junior class also produce, "On a Serious Note," a variety show in broadcast-magazine format with interviews and features.

Students also work to film certain athletic events and drama and musical productions, with the assistance of QATV, which was formed in 1996 to serve the communications needs of residents, schools and businesses and organizations in Quincy. In addition to allotting broadcast time to the QPS, the station provides training on, and

access to, video production equipment and facilities, as well as other communication technologies.

"We borrow their van, and they help us set up so that the student crews can shoot events or segments for their productions," said Green.

"The kids do a bulk of the production, but we'll go over and give them technical assistance with the equipment," said QATV Public Access Coordinator Jonathan Caliri, a Quincy High alumnus (Class of '98).

While a student in Green's class, Caliri and some classmates produced their own weekly sports show — "This Week in Sports," which now airs at 6 p.m. on QATV.

"At Quincy High, I was looking to take an elective and signed up for TV broadcasting," said Caliri. "I just had a great time. It definitely solidified that that would be a good career move."

Caliri began working as a volunteer at QATV in 2001, covering football games and local elections. As public access coordinator, he is responsible for production work, editing, mentoring and helping others produce their shows.

Green has taught broadcasting classes for 17 years and typically has 40-50 students in a given year.



Quincy High broadcasting teacher John Green works with student camera operator Courtney Forti.



Jeff Ohlson films student broadcasters Emily Gaeta and Mike Carbonneau.
PHOTOS: MEAGHAN CASEY

THE QUINCY EDUCATOR

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QPS
STUDENT PROFILE

Piano perfection

Blindness is no match for the musical mastery of McCarthy

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

He has a near-perfect pitch and has been able to play the piano from memory since he was six years old. He wowed 500 people in a packed Quincy High School auditorium with Beethoven's Sonatina, during Mayor William J. Phelan's inauguration.

He is also blind and just 13 years old.

Gerald McCarthy, a seventh-grade student at Broad Meadows Middle School, began playing the piano seven years ago with the help of South Shore Conservatory teacher Stephen Demers. He learns songs by listening to Demers play them once and by taking notes with a digital tape recorder. Sometimes to practice he listens to the songs on CDs, but mostly he relies on his memory.

Born in the Philippines, McCarthy came to Quincy when he was two years old. He is one of David and Roseanne McCarthy's seven children, five of whom are adopted. For pre-school, he attended the Perkins School for the Blind, where he experimented with

keyboard and guitar.

"I picked up an interest in music back then, and my mother encouraged me to play," said McCarthy.

Stretching out his arms to the ends of the keys, McCarthy effortlessly finds his center, puts his fingers in starting position and begins playing with advanced talent.

"He has remarkable memory in his fingertips," said Lynn Rowe, QPS teacher of the visually impaired.

Rowe has worked with McCarthy throughout his time at Merrymount Elementary and Broad Meadows.

"I'm really proud of him," said Rowe. "He's such a hard-working student and has a lot of spirit. He's always up."

"Quincy's done a wonderful job bringing in resources for him," said his father David.

"He's just a machine. He loves school and he's done well academically."

Musically gifted, McCarthy played in an adult jazz group at the Conservatory last

"I'm really proud of him. He's such a hard-working student and has a lot of spirit. He's always up."

Lynn Rowe, teacher



PHOTO: PAULA MULLER

Gerald McCarthy may be blind, but that has not slowed the 13-year-old Quincy student from becoming a superb piano player.

spring, learned the clarinet while at Broad Meadows and taught himself the drums.

"He likes to experiment," said the elder McCarthy, who sits on the Quincy School Committee. "Next he wants to take guitar lessons and eventually learn the bagpipes. His sense of sound and ability to pick up music is unbelievable."

McCarthy annually plays in the district's band and music concerts. He performed at

the mayor's inauguration in 2004 and was invited back to perform this year.

"Gerald kids with the mayor that he always steals the show," said David McCarthy.

Outside of music, McCarthy plays volleyball at Broad Meadows and enjoys swimming. He was recently featured on Quincy Access Television demonstrating kung fu, an art he learned through the Quincy Recreation Department.

Program pairs veteran teachers with newer teachers

BY GRETCHEN WEBER

When Paul Griffith started as a first-year teacher at Central Middle School last September, he was excited, intimidated, and a little stressed. Like most first-year teachers, he had good days and not-so-good days as he learned the ins and outs of teaching his subject - sixth-grade geography — and as he became comfortable in a new work environment. Fortunately, he had Bill Pavao, a veteran U.S. History and geography teacher at Central, looking out for him.

"He helps me with pretty much everything," said Griffith. "We meet every day, even if it's just for five minutes. It really helps to know that someone is there, wanting to know how it's going and if I'm all set."

Pavao and Griffith are part of Quincy's mentoring program, which partners new teachers

with veteran Quincy educators who help the new recruits with everything from classroom management to planning lessons to directions to the cafeteria. In place for more than 10 years, the mentoring program is voluntary for both mentors and "protégés," as the new teachers are called. Ninety-five percent of this year's 40 new teachers are taking advantage of the program.

"Teaching is a difficult profession, and it can be a lonely profession," said assistant superintendent Dr. Carmen Mariano. "Teachers are alone in a room serving the role that they do. To have the opportunity to establish meaningful relationships

with caring adults in the schools increases the retention level of our new teachers. Teachers stay when they feel that someone cares and relates to them."

Griffith attended Central as a student, so when

he arrived as a teacher he was already familiar with the building and even some of the teachers who he had had as a student. For him, Pavao's help was essential not in getting used to new surroundings, but in actually planning lessons, managing his classroom, and communicating with parents. And because Pavao taught Griffith's subject last year, the two are able to talk specifics about the geography curriculum, and Pavao is able to truly relate to Griffith's experience.

"I would be much more stressed without him," said Griffith. "It's relieving to have someone checking in. Sometimes he'll pop in randomly when I'm teaching, and that's really great. People will say, 'You're doing a great job,' but they don't see me teach. He is actually seeing me in

the classroom, and having a pair of experienced eyes like that really helps."

Pavao says that he has enjoyed being Griffith's mentor and he believes in the mentor program.

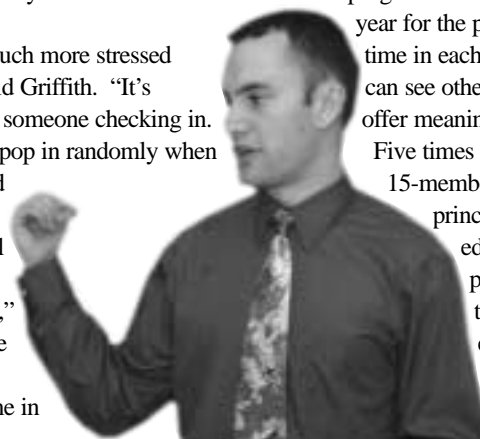
"It's a good idea to pair teachers up like this," he said. "It's important to have that contact person in the building, a person you can go to."

In addition to the informal check-ins that mentors and protégés frequently have, the program also allows for two substitute days each year for the pairs, which allow them to spend time in each other's classrooms so that protégés can see other teaching styles and mentors can offer meaningful feedback.

Five times each year, the mentoring program's 15-member leadership team (Mariano, principals, teachers, and retired Quincy educators) gets all the mentors and protégés across the district together to swap stories, offer encouragement, and to let the new teachers know that they are far from alone.



Central Middle School Paul Griffith, left, gets some advice from mentor Bill Pavao.



Academic Decathlon team scoring big

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Walking into North Quincy High's wall-to-wall trophy room, banners, trophies and accolades for athletic teams abound. But this year, a different kind of team is also bringing in honors.

The school's Academic Decathlon team, in its best season to date, is conquering a state-wide battle of the minds.

"Academics are really the backbone of what we're accomplishing in the schools, so it's great to see this team earn some recognition," said NQHS Decathlon advisor Tom Donnelly. "They put a lot of hard work in."

Founded to foster scholastic excellence among high school students representing a wide diversity of backgrounds and interests, the Academic Decathlon is a nationwide program involving more than 40 states and thousands of students. Teams consist of nine starters with a variety of grade-point averages, ranging from C to A students.

Donnelly, now in his 36th year teaching, formed the district's first team in 1993.

"Back in the early '90s, some of the kids were interested in starting a team," he said. "It's a wonderful program; a complete addition to education for all kinds of students."

Students learn about subjects they might not normally study during the school day and spend months training for competition. The Massachusetts Academic Decathlon, now in its 25th season, matches teams of students from high schools across the state in a series of 10 academic events, covering economics, language and literature, mathematics, music, fine arts and social science.

In addition, students compete in events measuring communication skills, which include writing an essay, delivering prepared and impromptu speeches and answering interview questions. The competition culminates in the Super Quiz — a team event on a single subject. This year's topic is "The European Renaissance: Renewal and Reform."

"It's a rigorous all-day event," said Donnelly. "The kids come out of it learning so much, and I do, too."

In November, NQHS placed fourth in the

preliminary competition for large schools, held at Sharon High School. The team placed third in the state championship at Westwood High School on March 4, North Quincy's highest finish ever.

"The team did the best this year than they ever did," said Donnelly. "We have a lot of veteran starters this year who were well prepared going into it."

In the state championship, North Quincy was led by team captain Lisa Luo, who earned a bronze medal in grammar and literature and for her interview. Victor Li was the team's high scorer and earned a bronze medal for science, a silver medal for art and the coach's medal. Bao Tran Nguyen finished in third place in the super quiz. Stephen Wong did well in art, essay and the interview. Ada Chen scored well on the economics exam and the interview. Peter Phan scored well on the super quiz, art exam and

interview. Caitlin Saia achieved high scores on the essay, speech and interview. Vicky Liang registered the team's highest score on the essay.

Also representing North Quincy as alternates were: Deanna Mirabile, Kim de la Cruz, Jessica Johnson and Jennifer Wu.

About three dozen students have been involved in the program throughout the year, attending practices and seminars after-school. Boston Financial Data Services, State Street Corporation and other business partners show their support by hosting seminars and practice interviews to better prepare the team.

Across town, Quincy High School formed its first decathlon team last fall, under the direction of Evelyn Ryan, head of the math department. The program grew out of the encouragement and support of new principal Frank Santoro.

"In our first year, it was really about getting our feet wet," said Ryan, who has taught at QHS for 18 years. "It was an exciting program, and the kids were really enthusiastic. For me, it was a new challenge to learn new subjects. It really takes you out of the box."

QHS will be offering course credit for decathlon members next year, allowing the team to practice during school hours. Ryan will begin recruiting during fall registration.



PHOTO: PAULA MULLER

North Quincy Decathlon Team members Bao Tran Nguyen, left and Vicky Liang prepare for a competition.



"If you could see some of these kids and what they're up against ... you think, 'Wow, this is pretty cool.' "

Dan McHugh, teacher



Top right, teacher assistant Elisabeth Hart with Francis McCarthy; above, paraprofessional Maryellen Logan helps Nathyn Chen; right, teacher Alison Richter with Clyde Shtino.



Winning ways

Special Olympians strike gold in Quincy schools

By MEAGHAN CASEY

A few times a year, the Clifford Marshall Elementary School gymnasium is transformed with inflatable footballs, obstacle courses and even bowling stations. Guided by the oath, "Let me win; but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt," the Special Olympics athletes charge from one event to the next, putting their strength, mobility and dexterity to the test.

Coordinated through Special Olympics Massachusetts, the events contribute to the physical, social and psychological development of the Quincy Public Schools special-education students. They provide students with continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, prepare for entry into school and community programs, express courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, peers and the community.

In December, students in intensive special needs classes competed in a series of events ranging from shooting basketballs, hitting

tee balls and kicking inflatable footballs and soccer balls. They also climbed through manipulative stations and a resistance tunnel. The early February event, for primary students in the district's substantially separate classes, featured a bowling station, basketball shooting, indoor high-jump and a target throwing station.

"If you could see some of these kids and what they're up against, and take a step back, you think, 'wow, this is pretty cool,'" said QPS adaptive physical education teacher Dan McHugh. "It's nice to see the children interacting, taking social cues and enjoying themselves in a somewhat competitive, but mostly fun, environment."

Each June, more than 100 QPS special education students participate in a half-day track and field event, held at Pageant Field. Sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Quincy, Police Citizens Academy and other community donors, the event features food, music and a medal ceremony.

"It's our big finale," said McHugh. "It's pretty neat. Both high school bands come down to play, and there's a lot of support."



“

‘They’re perfect in the same classroom. They don’t compete at all, which I can’t get over. They love being together, but they also have their own groups of friends.’

Katie Fournier
Parker Elementary teacher

In most schools, having one set of identical twins in the first grade would be unusual. But at Parker Elementary, there are four sets of identical twins. Back row, from left, Jessica and Jennifer Zou, Brian and Colin Maloney and Devan and Yasmine Yilgor. In the front row, from left, are Michael and Matthew Soohoo.

PHOTOS: PAULA MULLER

Seeing double — times four

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Bounding two at a time into a first-grade classroom at Parker Elementary School, four sets of identical twins came face-to-face, giggling at the novelty of seeing double.

First came the Maloney twins, Brian and Colin, with their matching red hair and freckles. The boys are students in Katie Fournier’s classroom. For the two, who also have an older brother in sixth grade, the best thing about twin-hood is always having their best friend with them.

“They’re perfect in the same classroom,” said Fournier. “They don’t compete at all, which I can’t get over. They love being together, but they also have their own groups of friends.”

Next, skipping into the room hand-in-hand, came Jessica and Jennifer Zou. Jessica is a student of Lisa Bates and Jennifer is a student of Fournier, making them the only set of twins to be separated in different classrooms. The twins explained it’s simple to tell them apart just by looking at their shoes.

“I wear sneakers and she wears boots,” said Jennifer. “Sometimes we wear the same shoes for fun,”

she said, laughing.

“Jen’s like a little ray of sunshine,” said Fournier. “She’s so motivated and she gets along well with everyone. She’s always talking about her sister and whenever she picks a prize from our treasure box, she asks to pick one for Jessica, too.”

The girls, who came from practice for the school’s Lunar New Year celebration, brought out fans and began showing off their dance moves as Matthew and Michael Soohoo ran into the room. Students of Bates, the boys wore matching outfits, just for the day, and smiled ear-to-ear at the scene in front of them.

Last to arrive were the Yilgor twins, Devan and Yasmine, from Marianne Salas’ class. Identifiable by the color of the elastics in their hair, the girls joined in the guessing game of telling apart the other twins in front of them.

“It’s not at all hard to tell them apart,” said Fournier. “They’re all very independent and have completely different personalities. They have such a genuine love for the other one. It’s awesome to have them in the classroom.”



From top, the Soohoo twins, the Zou twins, the Yilgor twins and the Maloney twins.



Atlantic Middle School students, from left, Cassandra Reamer, Abigail Gardner, Jillian Fisher, Jillian Keezer, Julia Gervais, and Katelyn Morrissey show some of the items they included in birthday bags they created for homeless families.

Point Webster Middle School students Rehema McPherson, front, and Alexa Reichert work on quilts students made for the Quincy Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.



Beechwood Elementary School students, including Alex Arabian, left, and Kevin Riordan prepare a community garden for planting.

Bridget Durkin, right, gives a plant to a resident at the Eventide Nursing Home as part of the Bernazzani School's Spring into Poetry annual event.



Lincoln-Hancock students Shawn Downey, left, and Anthony Kelly play cards with a resident of the Bauer House senior housing development.

Atherton Hough kindergarten students conducted a hat-and-mitten drive for the homeless.



Learning to serve

Giving back to society is on
the curriculum in Quincy

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Quincy students are learning lessons beyond the books and gaining a civic education through Community Service Learning.

CSL is an education methodology in which service is an integral part of a regular academic classroom in the Quincy Public Schools. CSL projects address real needs of the community, provide youth with leadership roles and bring about positive change.

Elementary schools

"Children at all our elementary schools perform countless acts of community service while learning about their world, our society and themselves," said Bill Bloomer, Clifford Marshall Elementary School assistant principal. "Our teachers and students involve parents, senior agencies, community agencies, local industries and service agencies, and work year-round to give back to our community."

In the past year, students have participated in fundraising activities such as a Walk for Diabetes, raised funds for the American Cancer Institute, St. Jude Children's Hospital and the Easter Seals Foundation and collected supplies for Shriners Burns Institute, the Quincy Animal Shelter and Toys for Tots. Food drives have been organized at almost every elementary school, benefiting the Seaside Advocacy Center, the Seaside Food Pantry, the Germantown Neighborhood Center, the Salvation Army, Project Bread and the Quincy Crisis Center.

"The Community Service Learning projects teach students that giving is better than receiving," said Squantum Elementary School Principal Donald Houghton, whose students collected more than 30 boxes of food for the Salvation Army and 20 boxes of toys to assist needy families this year.

Globally, students have reached out to sponsor children living in impoverished areas of Columbia and South Africa. To recognize the men and women serving overseas, students have sent thank-you notes, pictures, phone cards, paperback books and toiletries.

Middle Schools

In the district's five middle schools, nearly 40 service initiatives were completed last year, and students and teachers are continuing their commitment to the community through current projects.

"Community-service is a significant part of life at our middle schools," said Isabel Ventre, QPS coordinator of education for the homeless. "Student projects encompass intergenerational programs, service learning and school-wide drives to raise items needed for a variety of populations."

Students have collected new clothes, toys, books, art supplies, food and coats for families in need. They have also sent supplies and correspondence to soldiers in Iraq. Some students met on Saturday mornings and after school creating birthday bags for children living in DOVE (DOMestic Violence Ended) shelters.

Last fall, students volunteered at the Senior Citizens Annual Conference, serving food, escorting presenters, carrying equipment and visiting with attendees. To address

the dangers of tobacco, alcohol and peer pressure, students have worked on posters and brochures, reflecting anti-drug messages and talked to fifth-graders about the subject.

High schools

Students at both high schools are actively involved in service projects, through school-wide initiatives, classroom projects and formal service organizations such as the Thomas Jefferson Forum and Interact, a Rotary-sponsored service club. The Junior Air Force ROTC at both high schools is committed to year-long service, and Student Council membership includes volunteering as a component of their charter. Student Council projects have included fundraisers for the QPS early-childhood program, participation in the Walk for Education and the Walk for Diabetes and organization of teacher-appreciation activities and citywide events for young children. More than 100 students are involved in the Thomas Jefferson Forum, benefiting nearly 20 institutions and organizations that include the Quincy Crisis Center, the YMCA, the Jimmy Fund and

Thomas Crane Public Library.

Culinary art students donate food throughout the year to nonprofit agencies and schools in the city. Carpentry students built and donated Adirondack chairs which were auctioned off to raise money for school programs. Health Technology students have conducted monthly blood-pressure screening clinics to assist faculty and staff monitoring their health. Fashion-design students made scarves for foreign-exchange students and sold yellow scarves to support U.S. troops. Early childhood development and education students prepared hospital kits and creative storybooks for patients at Children's Hospital.

Across the district, students have shown tremendous support for the victims of the Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina. Classrooms and student groups at all grade levels joined forces to raise funds for Quincy Cares, an unprecedented city-wide effort to raise \$1 million for the hurricane-ravaged area of Jefferson Parish, Louisiana.

Montclair Elementary School Student Council representatives front from left, Brielyn O'Leary, Donna Niosi, Emma Ainsley, Olivia Umoren; middle row, David Dreyer, Nathan Donahue, Steven Carter, Erin Renken; back, Omar AboSido raised \$831 for tsunami victims.



North Quincy High School staff and students present a check to Isabel Ventre, QPS coordinator of education for the homeless, for Dove, a shelter for battered women.

Parker School fifth-grader Ashley McBrien mingles with a resident of the Fenno House following a holiday concert conducted by music teacher Ken Walsh. Parker students entertained senior citizens with songs, instruments, and home-made holiday cards.



Squantum Elementary School students held their 11th annual holiday toy drive, in partnership with Ayers Handicap Conversion Center, Inc. State Rep. Bruce Ayers stopped by to pick up the 20 boxes of toys.

From left, Quincy High fashion-design students Samantha Reynolds, Lisa Tammare and Marita MacKinnon display scarves they made for foreign-exchange students from Quincy, France.



Sterling Middle School students conducted a book drive through Operation Paperback, which sends books overseas to U.S. military personnel. From left are, Katherine Chernicki, Samantha Troup, Dan Breslin and Katie Geraghty.

INVESTING in EDUCATION

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Business and education often go hand-in-hand, and a clear model for such a partnership is ever-present in Quincy.

Local businesses throughout the Quincy community play a dominant role as partners in education, giving back to and investing in the schools that will graduate the next generation of employees and leaders. Currently, 72 businesses and organizations serve as active partners through the Quincy School-Community Partnership, funding academic and extracurricular activities, offering scholarships and donating their time and resources. The partners provide a range of career-related services, including job shadowing, internships, employment, classroom visits, mentoring and tutoring.

“Community partners are vital to the success of our school system,” said James Mullaney III, QSCP executive director. “With a collaborative effort, we can provide the very best for the workforce and leaders of tomorrow.”

Governed by a 13-member board of directors, the QSCP works to bring the schools, businesses and community organizations together to enhance and enrich the educational lives and opportunities of Quincy Public Schools students. Among the 72 partners are 20 President’s Path contributors who provide an annual gift of at least \$500. They choose from four levels of financial sponsorship: platinum, gold, silver or bronze.

Each level of partnership directly supports Quincy teachers, students and classrooms, funding such things as teacher mini-grants, state-of-the-art technology, music programs, hands-on materials and supplies, and the expansion of classroom libraries. Platinum

Businesses in Quincy go to great lengths to help schools



Superintendent Dr. Richard DeCristofaro, left, and Mayor William J. Phelan speak at the annual partnership breakfast.



Superintendent Dr. Richard DeCristofaro, back left, with teachers who received mini-grants from the Quincy School-Community Partnership.

Boston Marriott Quincy will host Motown and More!, a concert by Atlanta Sound Band, on April 7, and an “Evening at the Pops,” featuring the Quincy Symphony Orchestra, on May 11. The Historical Walk for Education is scheduled for May 20 at Dorothy Quincy Homestead, and the annual Partnership Golf Tournament will be held at Presidents Golf Course on June 21. For tickets to these events, call (617) 984-8888.

“A lot of these events are about providing additional resources and bringing the community together,” said Keith Segalla, director of Extension and Continuing Education, who serves on the QSCP board of directors.

Through the fundraising events and contributions from business partners, 127 teachers were awarded \$27,000 in mini-grants for the 2005-06 school year. To date, more than \$57,000 has been awarded in mini-grants, funding creative classrooms, enrichment programs, field trips and educational resources.

Quincy School-Community Partners 2005-06

Platinum level: Aviva Life Insurance BlueCross/BlueShield of Massachusetts Boston Marriott, Quincy Boston Scientific Quincy College Quirk Auto Dealerships Roche Brothers Supermarkets State Street Corporation	College Fallon Ambulance Service Fleet Bank Foley Chrysler Plymouth Friendly's Ice Cream Gillette Retiree Outreach Program Hancock Park Rehabilitation and Nursing Center Impressions Plus, Inc. Junior Achievement Keohane Funeral Home KeySpan Energy Delivery Kiwanis Club of Quincy Marina Bay on Boston Harbor Marina Bay Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Marina Place Mass. National Guard National Association of Government Employees National Fire Protection Association Norfolk County Sheriff's Department Outback Steakhouse Panera Bread Primary Source Quincy Historical Society Quincy Medical Center Quincy Police Department Sears, Roebuck and Company Smith & Brink, P.C. South Coastal Bank South Shore Buick Company South Shore Cooperative Bank South Shore YMCA Sovereign Bank of New England Star Market/Shaw's Super Market Stop & Shop Companies The Rotary Club of Quincy Thomson & Thomson U.S. Naval Shipbuilding Museum
Gold level: Graeber, Davis & Cantwell, PC Quincy Credit Union Quincy Mutual Fire Insurance Co.	
Silver level: Citizens Bank South Shore Bank	
Bronze level: 3 Phase Elevator A WIN Management Bank of Canton East Coast Petroleum Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Starbucks Coffee Symmons Industries Inc.	
Other partners: ABCD Project Foster Grandparent Program Altrusa International, Inc. of Quincy Arbella Mutual Insurance Agency Ayers Handicap Conversion, Inc. Bank of America Boston Financial Data Services Braintree Hospital Rehab Network Browning-Ferris Industries, Inc. C-21 Richmond Associates CityLab Colonial Federal Savings Bank Dependable Cleaners Eastern Nazarene	

Quincy Police resource officers play multiple roles in schools

By MEAGHAN CASEY

School resource officers play a unique role in the Quincy Public Schools, uniting the district and the Quincy Police Department in a shared vision of advancing the city’s youth.

The officers develop security policies and intervention programs at the schools. Two full-time officers, Lisa Linskey and Steve Burgio, are stationed at Quincy High School and North Quincy High School, and make regular visits to the middle schools.

“At the middle school, it’s more of an as-needed basis,” said Linskey, QHS resource officer. “It’s more guidance than law enforcement at that level.”

Linskey was a patrol officer with the QPD for three years before becoming a school resource officer. She is in her third year as a resource officer and finds it rewarding to be working directly with students.

“Helping kids make better choices is always rewarding,” said Linskey.

As part of the program, the officers participate in the Quincy Public Schools Safety Security Team with security personnel, principals, deans, QPD officers, MBTA officers and other



School Resource Officer Lisa Linskey talks with Quincy High student Shane McNally.

community members. The group is involved in programs such as Operation Stopwatch, a non-confrontational program introducing teens to local officers.

“We have deans, security personnel and probation officers at

“T” stops after school, basically going over to students and saying, “I want you to meet Officer so-and-so,” said Linskey. “It’s a way of opening up communication and making our students and officers more familiar with one another.”

Linskey, whose son graduated from QHS in 2002, is no stranger to the community. She grew up in Quincy and attended QHS, and is still very much connected to the students, families and teachers at the school.

“A lot of the same teachers are walking around, and I went to school with a lot of the kids’ parents,” said Linskey. “If I tell them I’m going to call their mother, they know I mean it.”

In addition to monitoring behavior, the resource officers also offer awareness and intervention programs for students, such as Danger Intervention Violence Awareness, a program designed specifically for girls. Throughout the district, community officers and sergeants from both the QPD and the Quincy Fire Department volunteer in educational and enrichment programs. They direct fire safety, drug and alcohol prevention and a variety of other informational programs for youth. They also play a role in after-school and extended-day activities from cooking to tae kwon do.

Students learning formula for good health

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Foregoing the temptation to sleep in, students at Central Middle School are up and running at 7:15 a.m., playing soccer or basketball in the gym or heading outside with the morning running club.

These students are motivated by the values of a healthy lifestyle as part of Central's Jump Up and Go! Healthy Choices program, administered by the Mass.

Department of Public Health and funded by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. The theme of the program, "5-2-1

Jump Up and Go!," encourages youth to eat five or more servings of fruits and

vegetables, limit watching television to two hours and participate in one hour of physical activity a day. The campaign was initiated in 1998 in

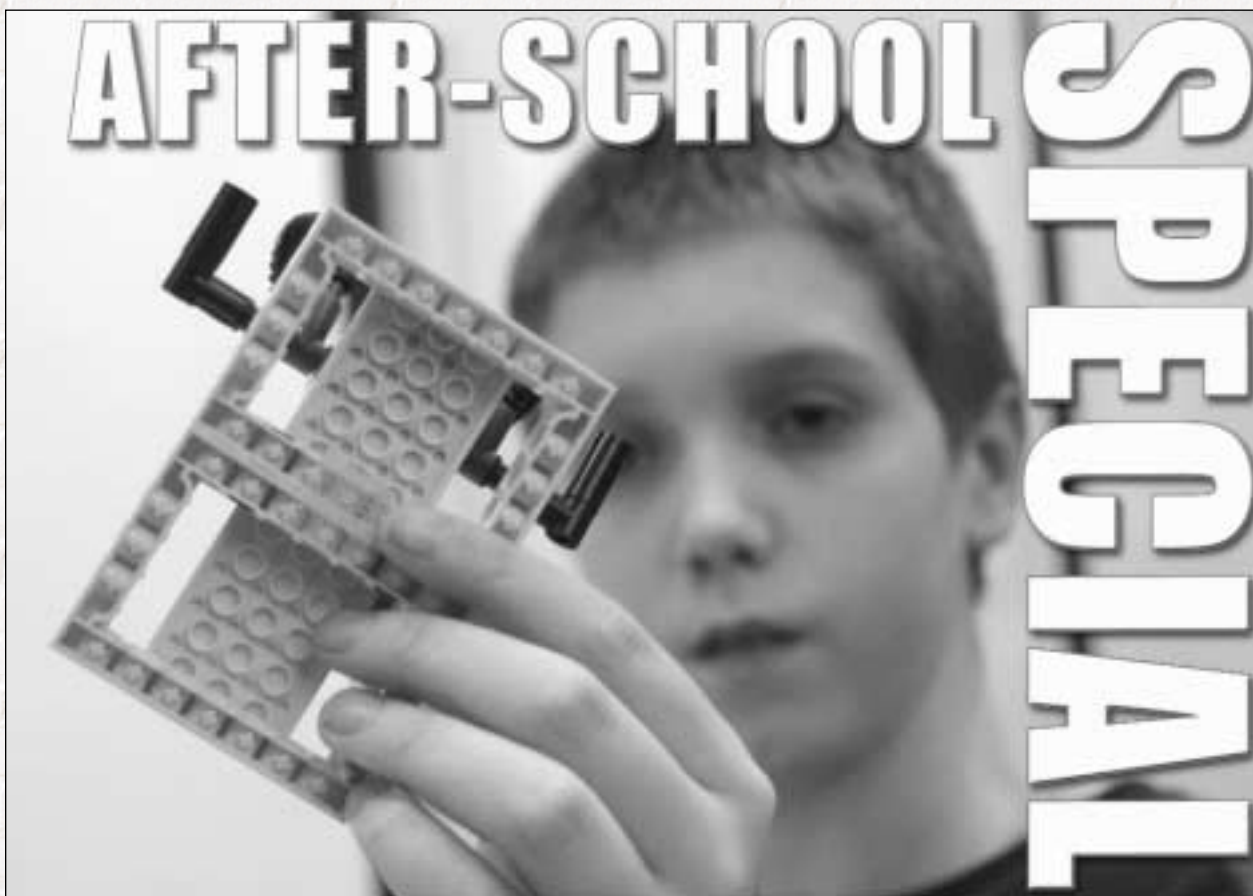
response to data that indicated children's participation in physical activity was in significant decline and childhood obesity was on the rise.

"We talk about healthier choices, exercising and eating right," said Sarah Stebbins, program facilitator at Central. "We try to target kids who might normally go home and turn on the TV, and teach them there are other roads to follow."

Central was recognized last fall by Blue Cross, receiving \$3,500 for its outstanding achievements in promoting physical activity, better eating choices and healthy behaviors in its students. The school was named the Best All-Around Jump Up and Go! Healthy Choices School and was recognized for implementing Planet Health, an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on improving the health and well-being of middle school students. The Quincy Public Schools was honored with the best in class award, earning an additional \$10,000 to be shared among the district's five middle schools.



Cedric Dybaud plays soccer at Central.



At left, Aidan Chick uses Legos to build a robot during an extended-day program at Sterling Middle School.

Below, volunteer Lauren DiBona works on a banner to inform students of activities available to them.

In Quincy, learning continues after the final bell has rung

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

The last bell rings signaling classes are out, but for many Quincy students, the day is far from over.

The classrooms stay alive with music, dance, games, cooking and academics through the extended-day opportunities of Quincy Public Schools.

"They're unbelievable activities," said Keith Segalla, QPS director of Extension and Continuing Education. "They keep our kids safe, prepare them academically and assist working families."

At Snug Harbor Community School, fourth-graders explore science through hands-on activities and demonstrations, led by an instructor from Mad Science of Boston. Third- through fifth-graders partake in health and fitness activities while kindergarteners and first-graders engage in an introduction to yoga. Students in grades K-2 learn to create their own storybooks and participate in arts and crafts from different regions and countries. Grade 3-5 students create three-dimensional art, making models of real-life buildings or amusement parks, and also transform a book of their choosing into a staged production.

Across town, students at Sterling Middle School participate in programs such as LEGO robotics,

yoga, rock climbing, intramural basketball or volleyball and C² -- a series of math programs designed for students to make connections between the MCAS and the real world by creating floor plans and models of what they designed. Students also produce stunning works of art, learn dance techniques and prepare for the school's yearly drama productions.

Snug Harbor and Sterling Middle are two of eight schools currently serving as sites of 21st Century Community Learning Centers

(CCLC). Others schools include Clifford Marshall Elementary, Lincoln Hancock Elementary, Atlantic Middle, Broad Meadows Middle, Central Middle and Point Webster Middle.

Funded by the Mass. Dept. of Education, the 21st CCLC program enables schools and community partners to launch after-school activities that benefit the educational, health, social service, cultural and recreational needs of the district's students. Quincy's 21st CCLC partners include the South Shore YMCA, the Gillette Company, the Quincy Police

Department, Bay State Community Services and the Thomas Crane Public Library.

Programs begin in September and run throughout the school year, with individual calendars for each site. There is also a 4-week summer program.

Winter and spring programming choices, running Jan. 23 to May 19,

include a range of academic assistance, enrichment programs, life skill development programs, recreational activities, performing arts, computer

activities, mentoring, community service activities, parent education activities and intramural and extramural sports. Students choose from activities such as scrap-booking, musical theater, puppetry, literary magazine, guitar, dance camp and rock climbing. Most programs run during after-school hours, but select programs run before school or on Saturdays.

In addition to the 21st CCLC program, the QPS Office of Extension and Continuing Education offers Saturday institutes and performing arts throughout the school year and summer. K-5

students gain academic support through programs such as Math Mania or Sensational Science, and enjoy art, chess, crafts, cooking, cheerleading and robotics. Unique programs allow students to explore the rainforest through drama, learn Chinese calligraphy, recreate a pyramid and solve mind puzzles through the magic of math. Students also test their singing and dancing abilities through Institute Idol or Dance Like the Stars, and gain an introduction to the French or Spanish language and culture.

At the high school level, the QPS offers Winter School, as well as Summer School, for students to make up courses which are required for graduation credits. Classes meet after school, two days a week. In addition to course offerings in English, science, social studies, math and Spanish, students enroll in enrichment courses that include an SAT preparatory course and an academic success course, which provides homework assistance and tutoring.

For the musically inclined students in grades 2-12, the QPS Office of Extension and Continuing Education offers an after-school string instrument program. The year-round program seeks to provide high-quality, affordable string instrument instruction to children, young adults and parents of participating students.



Full-day kindergarten a big hit

FULL-DAY: from Page 1

gives teachers the time to delve into the curriculum, launch exciting projects, and give essential, individualized attention to every student. Starting next September, all Quincy kindergarteners will have the opportunity to be in school full-time, and to reap all the benefits of having a complete day in the classroom.

“With a full day, teachers have the flexibility to have a real hands-on approach to learning, which is so important for students at this age,” Dunn said. “In my class, we do a lot of big projects that we just couldn’t do in a half-day class, and the kids love them.”

Kerri Connolly, Quincy’s early childhood coordinator, said that a lot of research went into Quincy’s decision to make full-day kindergarten standard for the district.

“We found a lot of research

that demonstrates the benefits of full-time kindergarten,” said Connolly. “A full day allows for a more in-depth curriculum, and it increases overall achievement for the whole child in areas such as early literacy, social and emotional development, and language skills. It also results in less stress and less pressure for students.”

Dunn agrees. Full-day kindergarten allows teachers to spend more time on subjects that students find challenging, to work individually with students while the rest of the class is working at stations or doing other activities, and it allows the class as a whole more time to play. Play, says Dunn, is crucial for the social and emotional development of 5- and 6-year-olds.

“I’m not talking about just running around on the playground,” said Dunn. “Play teaches children about conflict resolution. They can

come here and build with blocks with five other kids, and together, they need to figure out and agree on what their castle is going to look like.”

In addition to providing more time for play and the development of social skills, full-day kindergarten lets teachers spend more time on the academic subjects. The academic expectations for kindergarteners have risen in recent years with new standards and guidelines, says Connolly. Children need to learn more now, and in many cases, a half-day is not enough.

During this past year, there were six full-day kindergarten classrooms in Quincy. Evaluators compared the achievement scores of students in these classrooms with those of half-day kindergarteners, and the full-day students showed better results. There were also fewer special-education referrals coming from full-day kindergartens than from the half-day classes.

The parental response to full-day kindergarten has been overwhelmingly positive, said Connolly. Because so many students are already enrolled in after-school activities or day care, full-time kindergarten meets the needs of families by allowing students to continue learning throughout the day.



Marshall School teacher Mary Dunn and Kirsten Henderson work on a papier-mâché dragon.

Student is a counterterrorism expert

McGOUGH: from Page 1

“Simulating Terrorist Cells: Experiments and Mathematical Theory,” confirmed the theory that accounts for gaps in current knowledge of the structure of the terrorist cell by making assumptions about how the “perfect” terrorist cell must be organized.

As a freshman, McGough took on this theory as her science fair project, working closely with a researcher at Harvard University.

“My work was loosely based on his research,” said McGough. “Using partially-ordered sets, one can account for the hierarchy in terrorist cells, which are composed of both leaders and followers. By simulating a terrorist cell, I was able to test the predictions that the model implies.”

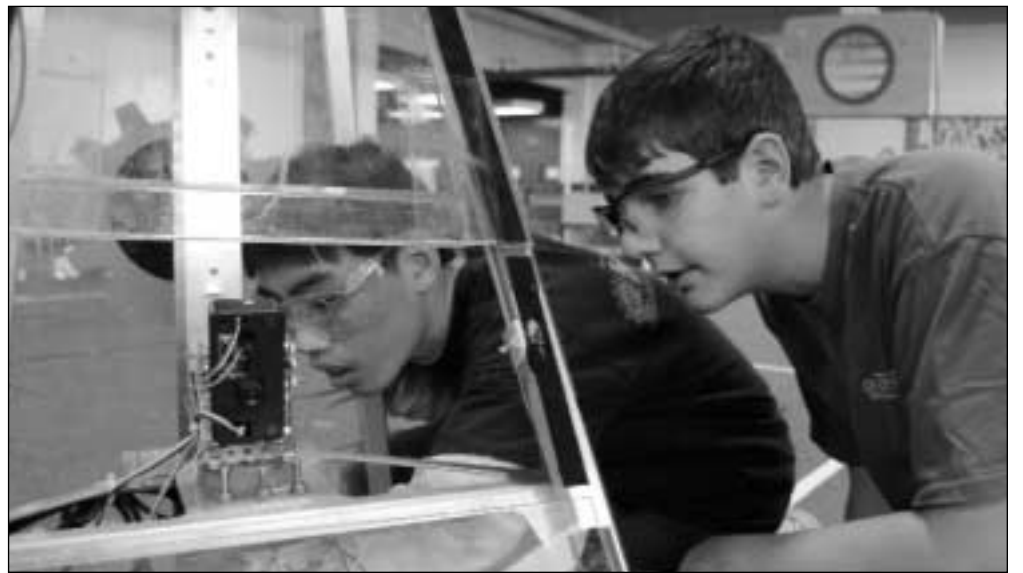
Since Sept. 11, 2001, tremendous amounts of information have been gathered regarding terrorist cells. The conference aimed to develop

new mathematical and computational techniques to assist in the analysis of that information to ensure the effectiveness of counterterrorism operations and strategies.

McGough hopes to pursue a career as a mathematician and computer scientist. After teaching herself algebra II over the summer, she is currently enrolled in calculus as a sophomore.

“Lauren has been a consistently outstanding student in my class because of her intellectual curiosity, her meticulous work and her consistency,” said NQHS calculus teacher Paula Johnson.

Born and raised in Quincy and the older of two children, McGough also enjoys the piano and is involved in the French club and Renaissance creative arts program at NQHS. She also serves as coach of the math team at Central Middle School, from which she graduated.



Vincent Wong, left, and Adam Squatrito work on building the robot.

Students are HYPER about robots

ROBOTS: from Page 1

Occupational Education Director Emily Lebo. “It’s almost like a full-time job.”

As a successful participant in FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics competitions, HYPER has won the New England regional competitions for four of the past five years and the Southern California regional for the past two years. Each January, all FIRST teams receive a new game and have just six weeks to prepare for competition.

This year’s game, “Aim High,” presents new challenges of launching balls and targeting them into goals; creating a lighted target to improve vision system function; and implementing human players in 3-on-3 competition. HYPER will join 40 other teams to compete in the New England regional competition, held in Boston, March 23-25. They are also qualified to compete in the national competition in Atlanta, GA in April.

“It should be interesting this year with about 80 Nerf balls, 6 machines and players out on the field,” said QHS science teacher Ed Smith, who serves as the drive team coach.

In his fourth year teaching and coaching, Smith was a member of one of the earliest HYPER teams. He is one of many alumni who have returned to lend their support.

“It’s a hands-on experience, giving them a taste of the real world,” said Smith. “They learn to work through deadlines and pressure, and know if they have a job to do, they get it done.”

In addition to alumni, the team is fortunate to have engineers and machinists from Gillette working directly with the students. Since 1998, Gillette has sponsored HYPER and has been actively involved in each stage of the team’s progress.

“The best part is for the students to be able to interact with the people from the business world, to work side-by-side with engineers from Gillette,” said Smith. “They respond to that very well.”

Limon Yee, who recently retired after 30 years at Gillette, is in his fourth year volunteering with the team.

Through robotics, students learn that the

technological fields hold many opportunities and that the basic concepts of science, math, engineering and invention can be exciting and interesting. James Keith, a QHS sophomore, became involved with robotics in middle school and his interest has increasingly grown since. He is currently enrolled in the school’s pre-engineering course, Introduction to Engineering and Design.

“We have great results from the team going on to engineering,” said Lebo. “Many of them go on to pursue careers in science, technology and engineering and a few are even working at Gillette now.”

For Nate Schow, a NQHS senior, robotics has become a family tradition. His older brother introduced him to the team as a freshman and his younger brother, Tim, a sophomore, is also now on the team.

“The best thing is powering up the robot and seeing that it actually works,” said Schow.

At the middle school level, the FIRST LEGO League robotics program cultivates an early interest in robotics and engineering. Students enroll in after-school clubs during both the fall and spring semesters, learning to program and operate robots, design innovative solutions to challenges and prepare researched PowerPoint presentations for competitions.

“The interest is awesome,” said Paul Cheney, a technology education teacher at Point Webster Middle School who has been coaching FLL teams for five years. “At Point Webster, 15-20 students sign up, on average, each semester. It gives them a great introduction to technology and engineering, as well as mathematical science. They do a lot of spatial thinking, judging time and distance.”

At the 2005 Gillette/Quincy Eastern Massachusetts FLL tournament, held at NQHS in December, Quincy earned honors in both the technical and research categories. Atlantic Middle School won the robot consistency award and Central Middle School was the quality runner-up. The challenge, themed “Ocean Odyssey,” was intended to raise awareness about the need to ensure the health, diversity and productivity of the world’s oceans for present and future generations. In April, QHS will host the Presidents’ Cup for students in the city’s five middle schools to compete.



Elementary Schools

Atherton Hough

The Math Wiz Bulletin Board rewards students as they demonstrate mastery of basic math operations. Once mastery is achieved and demonstrated the children's names are announced and they receive a Math Wiz certificate and pencil from the principal. The name of each student is then placed on the bulletin board within the shape of the operation.

Beechwood Knoll

Nancy Barron, grade 4 teacher and assistant principal, won a regional award from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority for environmental awareness in protection of waterways.

Bernazzani

The Bernazzani PTO annually funds author and artist programs for staff and students. The Meet the Author program this year hosted noted children's authors Jacqueline Davies and Barbara O'Connor. Authors share their writing craft and the start-to-finish process of having their works published. They read selections from their works, sometimes create illustrations and review the elements of writing. The program also hosted local firefighter and new author Bill Arienti on Feb. 17. Arienti has begun a series "Tales from Faxon" and read his first publication, "Scooter the Rabbit" to each class in grades K-4.

Later in the year, all students will have the opportunity to work with an artist for anywhere from one to three days. Kindergarteners will work with puppeteer Pat Boylan; grades 1 and 2 will work with

storyteller/puppeteer, Nan Rumpf; grades 3 and 5 will work with author/poet, Steve Ratiner; and grade 4 will work with author Matt Tavares.

Della Chiesa/Lincoln-Hancock

This spring will bring the retirement of eight teachers at Lincoln-Hancock. These teachers have a combined 258 years of service to the Quincy Public Schools. They are: Kathy Chella, grade 2; Terry Lawrence, grade 2; Clare Galvin, grade 3; Eve Powell, grade 3; Karin Dempsey, grade 4; Judy Considine, Title 1; Ann Emerson, Title 1; and Carol Sacon, ESL.

Marshall

The Marshall School is lucky to be part of a third-grade program called Savings Makes Cents. Each child that signs up has a savings account opened and the bank starts the account with a \$5 balance. Students can bring in money to be deposited monthly at the school, or they can go to the bank on their own.

The fourth-grade chorus was invited to sing at the Quincy Mutual Fire Insurance Company in December. They presented the songs that were sung at the Marshall holiday concert.

Merrymount

Fourth-grade teachers Dawn Ciardi and Ellen Wallace run an after-school enrichment program entitled Shakespeareance. Fourth- and fifth-grade students design the sets and perform Shakespeare for parents and other students.

Montclair

Family Literacy Night was held on February 28.

Parker

The Parker School staff has mixed emotions about June 1, 2006. That's the night they will honor Joan Walsh at the Neighborhood Club. Joan, who is retiring, has been the

kindergarten teacher at Parker for 36 years. Joan promises to come back whenever needed to support the new kids on the block.

Speaking of new kids on the block, Parker School teachers Katie Fournier, Lindsey Blampied, Liz Garvin, Kate Kelly and John Pye not only work together, they've started spending their weekends together as part of the Reading Cohort offered by Eastern Nazarene College. These first- and second-year teachers are building a teaching foundation of excellence to benefit our students now and well into the future. The group meets on Saturdays at North Quincy High. When all of their courses are finished, Katie, Lindsey, Liz, Kate and John, who teach grades 1-5, respectively, will receive full certification in reading and a master's degree in education.

Snug Harbor

On Jan. 19, children's book author Jacqueline Davies visited the Snug Harbor School and spoke to students about her book The Boy Who Drew Birds. Davies shared how the idea for the book about the life of John James Audubon originated and the steps in the writing and publishing process.

During the week of Jan. 23-27, Lt. Robert Servaes from the Quincy Fire Department presented lessons to each grade level on fire safety. In addition to emphasizing prevention, Servaes instructed students on how to respond to an emergency.

On Feb. 9, children's book author Barbara O'Connor visited the school and provided students with a workshop on how to improve their own writing. O'Connor is the author of numerous children's books including Fame and Glory in Freedom, Georgia, Moonpie and Ivy, Me and Rupert Goody and Taking Care of Moses.

Squantum

Attorney Frederick D. Smith Jr.

and Attorney David O. Brink are continuing their Business/School Partnership with Squantum School. Smith & Brink, P.C. is a general practice law firm that represents a wide variety of clients, from individuals and small businesses to large corporations and insurers. Staff and associates of Smith & Brink, P.C. provide financial support for the Squantum computer lab and help children explore the world of work. Brink visited fifth-graders in Mrs. Blampied's and Mr. Lewis' classrooms in February. He explained different aspects of law and described what takes place in a courtroom, and he conducted a mock trial for the students. David Brink Jr., the son of Atty. Brink, was the clerk of courts, Meghan White was the juudge, Bruce Situ was the defendant and Scott Higgins was the defense attorney during the mock trial.

Wollaston

Wollaston School students raised \$1,200 to assist the survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

At Christmas, students collected needed items to assist homeless families in Quincy, which were given to Isabel Ventre, QPS Coordinator of the Homeless, to distribute to the families. The school's elementary lab students, with the guidance of their teacher, June Joyce, prepared Christmas stockings for each of the mothers in the Quincy Teen Mothers Program.

The PTO is sponsoring a Family Dance with a Disney Theme on March 10.

Middle Schools

Atlantic

The Parent/Teacher Organization-School Council meets the second Tuesday of each month. Bilingual and English Language Learners classes and programs meet daily.

During the month of February, seventh-grade students participated in DARE classes. Seventh-graders also have

been participating in Peer Leaders anti-drug training.

Broad Meadows

Sixth-grader Georgia Papaconstadinou won the school-wide spelling bee and will represent Broad Meadows in the Patriot Ledger regional contest on March 25 at Lombardo's in Randolph.

Broad Meadows' Operation Days Work club will be honored by the Kiwanis Club as Junior Heroes on March 11 for their efforts in the global community. The club is led by seventh-grade teacher Ron Adams.

Eighth-grader Jessica Nguyen won first place in the American Essay Contest and was recognized at the November School Committee meeting for her outstanding work.

Central

Central's PTO will host an Internet safety night at its March meeting, scheduled for March 16 at 7 p.m. in the school's media center. The Internet safety presentation will be made at 7:30. All parents/guardians and staff members are invited to attend.

Central's annual Science Fair will be held April 11 at 6 p.m. Students will be receiving information from their science teachers regarding their participation in this event. Central will need judges from 1-4 p.m. that day. Please call 617-984-8725 or email cjoyce@quincy.k12.ma.us if you are interested in being a science fair judge.

Point Webster

Neil Banoey was the grade 5-6 champion and Yao He was the Grade 7-8 champion in the inaugural Point Webster Chess Tournament. The runners-up were Timmy McDonald in grade 5 and Dora Pepo in Grade 8.

Students and teachers created a variety of humorous, appreciative and artistic cards

for our recuperating soldiers at the Walter Reed Army Hospital.

Sterling

Sterling has had a successful year giving all students equal opportunity to access the curriculum. Sterling plans to build on its inclusion model, making the school a place for all to succeed. The curriculum is tailored to meet students' academic needs with consideration to specific individual needs.

Sterling's inclusion involves humanitarian efforts. The Helping Hands Youth Council, under the direction of eighth-grade teacher Jane Joyce, reaches out to others who need help. Sterling students wrote letters and sent gift bags to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Pennies for Patients is a fundraiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Added to these activities is the continued collection of aluminum can tabs for the Shriners' Burn Center and the collection of books for the Reach Out and Read Children's Hospital Literacy Program.

High Schools

North Quincy

Senior Stephanie Buscher won the Lion's Club speech contest in Quincy and will be moving on to the state contest.

NQHS seniors, Victor Li and Lisa Luo have been named Nation Merit Scholar finalists, making them eligible for national scholarships.

Juniors Joe Pratolongo and Chris Spencer have been selected to participate in the Massachusetts All-State Music Festival.

Quincy

The QHS Drama Club presents The Wizard of Oz March 24, 25 and 31 and April 1 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium. Battle of the Bands will take place April 6 at 7 p.m. The Science Olympics will be held April 13 from 8-9:30 a.m.

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SPORTS

THE QUINCY EDUCATOR

ON THE RIGHT



"This isn't a 15-game season; every kid participates, and with cross country, winter and spring track, the opportunities to grow, improve and succeed are greater."

Geoff Hennessey, track coach



TRACK

High jumper Ally Nee, left, clears the bar in a meet at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston. Above, Ben Johnson-Tatelbaum prepares to throw the shot put.

Co-op program continues to raise the bar

By AMANDA WEBER

The cooperative high school winter track teams from Quincy and North Quincy High may not have winning records, but athletes and coaches feel this combined program is a success nonetheless.

Started in 2003, the combined cross-county, winter and spring track program was put into place with the help of Peter Chrisom, academic dean at North Quincy and track coach since 1984, Geoff Hennessey, QHS science teacher and coach of cross country and track and field since 1988, and Ed Miller, athletic director for the two schools. Due to "struggling numbers" at Quincy High School, Hennessey and Chrisom felt that a combined program was the best way to give students at both schools equal opportunity, and Miller agreed. Chrisom coaches the boys team while Hennessey directs the girls.

Currently, with more than 80 students competing,

Hennessey believes the inclusive nature of track continues to bring students into the program.

"Many team sports run their schedule, 10 or 15 games and then they're done," said Hennessey. "This isn't a 15-game season; every kid participates, and with cross country, winter and spring track, the opportunities to grow, improve and succeed are greater."

The winter track schedule includes boys and girls varsity meets, two freshman-sophomore meets, a relay carnival, an elite invitational, an open all-comers meet, two freshman-only meets, and six JV events in the Atlantic Coast League.

While the teams were struggling record-wise (one win for the boys and none for the girls) Hennessey said, "We are improving every week."

The girls team features two undefeated athletes - sophomore high jumper Alex Nee, with a school-record jump of 5 feet and junior shot putter Kelly Pineo, who has a best throw of 33 feet, 1 inch this season.

The boys team also has a number of outstanding

athletes: Anthony Walsh, a senior shot putter with a best throw of 44-6; sophomore Matt Meyers, who has run a 4:55 mile, and Jeff Belobarak, a senior 2-miler with a best time of 10:50.

The combined program also encourages bonding between students from different schools. "The dynamic is great," said Hennessey. "Most of our kids are extremely bright in the classroom so they see the combo program as a strengthening and pooling of talent both with the coaches and with the athletes."

As a result of Quincy's open enrollment program, many athletes are neighbors or have trained together in the Quincy Track Club or middle school track, but attend different high schools.

"The kids get along, no problems at all. They work out together and compete together; we have great camaraderie on the team," said Chrisom. "The ACL is a tough league, and we have a great group of hard-working athletes here who are very committed to their goals."