

# Points of Pride, March 2009

## RC MURPHY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

### English

- Twelve 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders participated in the NY Knicks Poetry Slam Competition. Murphy produced 4 semi-final winners and one Grand Slam Finalist. This finalist performed her poem on the stage of NYC's Hammerstein Ballroom for an audience of over 500 people.
- Four 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were selected to participate in the National Council of Teachers of English, *Promising Young Writers Competition*.
- An 8<sup>th</sup> grade student won the 2009 Florence Cohen Memorial Poetry Contest and was invited to read his poem at the Smithtown Library.
- Over fifty 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students had their writing published in a new anthology, "Celebrating What is Important to Me."
- An 8<sup>th</sup> grade student had her work published on the *Teen Ink* Website.
- An 8<sup>th</sup> grade student was chosen as a runner-up in *Newsday's Wicked Writing Contest*. As a result of this honor the student's class traveled to NYC and had the pleasure to meet with the producers, director, and a few stars of the Broadway show, *Wicked*.



### Social Studies

Murphy participated in the National Geographic Bee this year. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were tested on their knowledge of geography. The winners from each class then faced off in the final round of the Murphy National Geographic Bee with one winner emerging from the school.

7<sup>th</sup> grade students visited the Three Village Historical Society's Traveling Spy Museum. Through the use of the contents of the Traveling Spy Museum, which included; colonial costumes, a model whaleboat, a spy glass, 2'x3' laminated maps, as well as a facsimile of a 1779 letter from George Washington to Benjamin Tallmadge about the operation of the Setauket Spy Ring, students were able to get a "hands-on" approach and appreciate the local history of the area.

The 9<sup>th</sup> grade students attended Medieval Times in New Jersey and experienced a real live trip "back in time" to when kings, queens, lords, and knights ruled over the land.

8<sup>th</sup> grade students were able to attend the play "Suffrage and Courage: A Woman's Quest for Equality" at the Ward Melville Heritage Organization.

The History Club began this year at Murphy. Over 50 students enrolled in this club; the members spend a tremendous amount of time discussing the importance of local, state, and national history.

7<sup>th</sup> grade students will be visiting the site of one of our nation's former capitals, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. While in the historic "city of brotherly love," the students will be visiting many of the places that helped to forge and create our great nation. They will be visiting Carpenter's Hall, Independence Hall, and the National Constitution Center.

R.C Murphy celebrated the historical inauguration of the nation's first African-American President on January 20, 2009. The entire student body of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> graders were brought to the gymnasium to witness Barack Obama take the oath of office from Chief Justice John Roberts and become America's 44<sup>th</sup> President.

### Music at Murphy

The Murphy Select Chamber Ensemble performed at Back to School Night and at the Stony Brook Hospital Sunshine Fundraiser. The concert master of the LISFA Middle School Orchestra was from Murphy and many fine string students represented our building at both the Long Island String Festival Association and Suffolk Music Educators Association.

A staff member and student performed at 35th Annual Tuba Christmas 2008, Rockefeller Center.

Many student musicians in our choral and band ensembles were chosen for the SCMEA Div. II and Div. III All County Festivals.

Choral members lead the way in the Bye Bye Birdie musical. The musical was a great success. About one-third of the student body participated in the performances and a special brunch and performance was hosted by both the Theater Department and the FACS staff.

### Mathematics

Math students have celebrated wonderful achievements this year. 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Team finished in 1<sup>st</sup> place and our 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Team also finished in 1<sup>st</sup> place in Suffolk County Division II. A 9<sup>th</sup> Grader was a top 5 winner in the Annual Suffolk County Mathematics Tournament.

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Science

**This year the Physical Education Department introduced a new unit to the curriculum. Table Tennis was introduced to the students and it was a huge success. Our students learned the skills and understood the rules to participate in doubles play. Students had fun while working on their hand/eye coordination.**

**Our Health classes had guest speakers from the Phoenix House. Counselors and speakers came and shared stories of their past. Our students learned valuable life lessons from the presentations.**

**As always, we are trying to promote lifelong fitness to our students in both our Health and Physical Education lessons.**

A grant was earned to set up a “bird feeding garden” in the courtyard adjacent to our greenhouse. The grant supplied a class set of bird watching guides, which use the coloration of birds as a guide.

The Greenhouse is becoming fully operational. Through the use of our science fundraising efforts we have purchased new benches for the greenhouse. A sprinkler system has been installed as well. We are now working on getting a sprinkler system installed in the courtyard area as well as the raised flower beds. The students will work to grow plants, flowers and vegetables.

Our Science Olympiad team has had wonderful success this year at the Regional Science competition. We had three teams entered in the competition; two teams come in second and third. The last team came in eleventh. The team won over twenty medals over all the events.

Our Science Bowl Club teams did great at the Regional Science Bowl held at Brookhaven National Laboratory on Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup>. We had two teams entered in the academic competition, which is a jeopardy style event, with questions covering, biology, math, earth science, physics, astronomy, chemistry and general science. Our teams came in first and second. Our first place team will now represent our region at the National Competition in Washington in late April.



Global Language

**The first week of February was Foreign Language Week. Students participated in poster, trivia, and door-decorating contests. Morning announcements were read in different languages and French, German, Italian and Spanish music was played over the PA in between class time. The cafeteria menu reflected the different countries of languages studied. During the week a traveling exhibit was displayed in the Global Language wing.**

**The department hosted our first Annual International Night. Over 250 attendees sampled dishes from around the world. Most of the dishes were prepared by our students of the Global Language Honor Society. Many enjoyed the entertainment of their classmates and teachers.**

**Additionally, we had ten French students participate in the American Association of Teachers of French poetry contest. One earned honorable mention and the other was the third place winner. The following students placed in the top 5 at their level in Suffolk County and will be attending an**

