

Message from Superintendent Dr. Joel T. DiBartolomeo

As we present our budget for the next school year, it is also a time to reflect on the accomplishments of students and staff and the wonderful partnerships we have within the Owen J. Roberts community. Together, we take pride in the value we place on education and, as a result, we continue to be richly blessed with world-class student achievements.

The development of next year’s budget was a bit more challenging than in previous years. The choices that are reflected in the 2011-2012 budget are the result of a thoughtful and well-planned process including a decision by administration and the school board to waive a portion of annual capital transfers; which may not be a option available to us every year. In addition, we elected not to fill open administrative positions vacated due to retirements and have instead looked for more efficient ways to accomplish the work. Managing attrition effectively will continue to be a key budget-balancing strategy. The budget proposed for next year maintains our commitment to student learning and ensures that students have what they will need to succeed in their classrooms, music and art studios, athletic venues and in the many other co-curricular areas in which they participate.

The decisions we have made position us strategically to face our current financial constraints and our projected economic realities in a fiscally responsible manner.

Over the years, funding for public schools has grown increasingly more complex, and the financial and political environment in which school districts must plan has become progressively more uncertain. We accept these changing forces as an opportunity to continue to identify more efficient ways to utilize our resources on behalf of quality teaching and learning. As such, we have developed a multi-year budget-planning process to cover the years 2012-2015.

Looking ahead, we will be forced to make some difficult decisions. While reductions for the next several years look significant at this time, budget choices will be made judiciously and in keeping with the School Board’s guiding principles, the District’s strategic plan goals, our core commitments and values, and the health and well-being of students and staff. Of course, we will also be looking at the allocation of District resources to ensure alignment with the central mission of the District—the teaching and learning process.

In the future, we may be suggesting cost-saving ideas that are new to our School District community. We are planning a process for public engagement that provides clear and factual information and opportunities for public discussion and input using already-established and successful means such as town hall meetings, surveys, focus groups and neighborhood walks. We invite you to participate fully.

Because our budget is shaped in part by the State’s budget, members of the Board and administration have met with our State Legislators in an effort to stay abreast of legislation that may impact the District. We have also sought to present our own views of the implications of the State’s budget and other legislative initiatives taking place in Harrisburg and the impact they may have on the Owen J. Roberts School District.

While we face an uncertain future, we have much going in our favor. We have a School Board that is committed to student success and financial stability. Our workforce is competent and experienced and is invested in the success of District. And we enjoy strong parent and community support. Because of these factors, I have no



doubt that we will continue to meet the challenges that come our way and emerge an even stronger and better school district.

We look forward to working together as a community to identify more efficient ways to utilize our resources in behalf of quality teaching and learning as part of our three-year budget development and planning process. We continue to update the budget information in the “Business and Finance Services” area of the District website and encourage you to visit often.

Art Takes Center Stage at High School

Hours of laughs, frustration, discovery, and reward are behind every piece of student work displayed from April 26 through May 3 when the main halls of the high school became a gallery. At an opening reception, Owen J Roberts’ finest unveiled the artwork created during this past school year.

“The art we present is different every year. It can be influenced by a major event at the school, or reflect a social issue. It is always an opportunity to look at the world through our kid’s eyes,” offered teacher and show organizer Tracey Shivello, adding, “The quality of the work always amazes people.”

This year’s show featured more than 800 pieces of art including ceramics, computer graphics, drawings, paintings, photographs, and sculptures. Horticulture students apply their design skills on a special project every year. This year’s “Rustic Outdoor Room” could have been an asset to any home.



Art by Advanced Placement, Drawing II Dual Enrollment, and Studio Art students were featured just inside the main entrance to the high school. Mary Reisenwitz, Morgan Dill, and Shelby Miller are graduating seniors who plan to study art in college. Mary will be attending Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore next fall and plans to major in Fine Art. Morgan Dill has selected Pennsylvania College of Art and Design in Lancaster to continue her art studies. Shelby Miller will be attending Juniata, and is considering curatorship or art history as her major and fine art as a minor.

The art department is indebted to Friends of the Arts who judge and provide cash awards in each category and to Mrs. Sheila McIntyre and her students for the wonderful music during the opening reception. View more student work and see show results at ojrsd.com.

At left: *Yellow Jar* by Morgan Dill. In the newsletter banner (L-R) Self-Portraits by Sophie Mann, Phoebe Burks and Amy Jannotti. See more artwork on page 4.

Wildcogs are “The New Cool”

Based on the theory that education should be about active creation, not rote learning, FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition was born in 1992. FIRST immerses students in the world of science, technology, inventing and problem-solving. With guts, gears and a dream, the inaugural Owen J. Roberts FIRST Robotics Team was formed last year. They call themselves the Wildcogs, and this year the group has expanded to include even more boys and girls who can talk about gear ratios and who thrive on invention.

From the day that the annual FIRST challenge is announced, students have exactly 6 weeks to engineer, build, pack, and ship a robot for competition. The kit that comes with the challenge provides a starting point only. The robot needs specific mechanisms to perform the tasks of the game, including an electrical system, machined parts, and a “brain” supplied with student-written computer code.

“For six weeks we work every day from at least 5:00 to 9:00,” offered Christopher Bove, an enthusiastic 10th grader who demonstrates the rules of “gracious professionalism”, which is the modus operandi of the team. Part of being graciously professional is to reach out to others. In that spirit, the high school team helped spawn two elementary FIRST Lego League (FLL) teams and a FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) team at the middle school this year, which Bove helped mentor.

Beyond mentoring, there are many other ways team members can gain leadership skills. At a recent competition, A.J. Constable, grade 10, led judges through a rigorous robot inspection process using a phone-book-sized set of rules which govern the dimensions, weight, electronics, mechanics, safety, and code of the robot. Jimmy Honicker, grade 10, was responsible for the mini-bot design and Emily Vey, grade 10, competed in the first ever all-female competition.



The 2011-12 school year will see FIRST integrated into the high school curriculum, with teacher and club advisor Janet Dynarski at the helm. Community mentors and industry supporters will still be vital. “The volunteers who teach these students electronics, engineering, and programming give a huge amount of their time and talent. FIRST is a partnership of public education with private industry and mentors, who are willing to invest their time in the future of our country,” said Dr. Sharon Davidheiser, parent mentor.

For more background on FIRST, read [The New Cool](#) by Neal Bascomb, New York Times bestselling author of [The Perfect Mile](#); an extremely enjoyable and suspenseful true account of one high school team’s journey from FIRST kick-off to competition.

First Cancer Awareness Banquet a Huge Success

High School student council members sponsored the first community Cancer Awareness Banquet on April 10, 2011. Nine-time Emmy recipient, Lynn Doyle, of “It’s Your Call with Lynn Doyle,” was the keynote speaker. Dr. Michael Lambo, Dr. Burhan



Hameed, and Dr. Kennedy J. Sbat presented vital information on cancer prevention. Mr. Paul Isenberg, CEO and co-founder of Great Guys Group accepted a check for \$5,600 raised by Student Council. Great Guys Group helps area families battling cancer by providing financial assistance and other resources.

OJR Schools Among Safest

A top priority for students and parents, conveyed through surveys and town halls, is the safety of the students in our schools. Recently, the Owen J. Roberts School District participated in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force (SEPA RTF) Safe Schools Workgroup School Security Assessment project. The Task Force’s vendor, Safe Plans, completed assessments for 150 schools in the five-county area. These assessments are being used to develop regional best practices for school safety and security and to develop a sustainable security assessment program. Three Owen J. Roberts schools were assessed. All three schools scored at least 20% above the five-county school averages, ranking our schools among the safest in the region.

Class of 1981 Reunion

The Owen J. Roberts High School Class of 1981 will celebrate their 30th reunion Saturday, October 15, 2011, at Spring-Ford Country Club. Additional weekend activities will include a high school tour and a get-together at OJR’s Friday night Homecoming football game. The reunion committee extends an invitation to all Class of 1981 graduates, our former teachers, as well as former classmates who moved prior to graduation. Please send updated contact information or any questions about the reunion festivities to ojrclassof1981@comcast.net or check out our Facebook Page – OJR High School Class of 1981 30th Class Reunion - to catch up with your friends! At this time, we are looking for updated contact information for many classmates, please check out the list on Facebook to see if you can help out.

Students Show Talent in Film Media

According to data published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, career opportunities in video and film production are expected to continue growing. Digital film production has opened exciting new vocational pathways sometimes finding audiences in previously inconceivable venues such as smart phones. At Owen J. Roberts, students have opportunities to learn the skills they need to pursue careers in video production and communication, or even to develop amateur video endeavors.

Recently, four teams of students from Owen J. Roberts participated in the 4500 Digital Video Contest, a regional competition requiring teams to produce films from start to finish in just 4500 minutes. Fifty-three teams competed and Owen J. Roberts’ students and films were nominated in nine out of ten categories and selected for best in three categories: Best Sound, Best Line of Dialogue, and Best Directing. There were six films nominated for best picture - OJR had two of the final six. Senior Courtney Fusselman won Best Director for her team’s film “Up and Down”. Along with the award, Courtney also learned that film is what she wants to do. “I loved those four days. I felt happy and excited and I know this is what I want to pursue,” she said.

OJR students entered eleven films in three different categories in the Greenfield Youth Film Festival, which “offers high school students direct access to university-level academics and seasoned industry professionals with a collective mission to explore and share each student’s voice through a holistic approach to filmmaking as a storytelling medium. GYFF integrates both an artistic and technical approach to process and provides a unique forum for young filmmak-



ers to collaborate, create and showcase their work,” according to their website. OJR students took home three of the sixteen awards given—the most of any school at the festival.

For a chance to view these competitive films, attend the 7th Annual OJRHS Film Festival on Wednesday, May 25th at 7:00 PM in the High School Auditorium.

Getting Active with Zumbatomic

The rage all started when licensed Zumba instructor Mrs. Latasha Whitmore demonstrated a few high-octane moves to the OJR Wellness Council. Mrs. Lisa Bailey took the idea back to East Coventry Elementary and started an incredibly popular after-school Zumbatomic® program.

“The kids went home and told their friends how much they loved it, and they asked their parents, who e-mailed their teachers, and it exploded,” said Mrs. Bailey.

The excitement was viral. The French Creek Wellness Committee used grant funding from the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation to bring Zumbatomic to recess. Zumbatomic is a child-appropriate version of the Latin-inspired, easy-to-follow dance-fitness party. One fifth grade student exclaimed, “That was the best recess ever!”

It is easy to see why Zumba Fitness has more than five million participants taking weekly classes in over 40,000 locations in 75 countries. Owen J. Roberts is getting in the groove as East Vincent Elementary has scheduled an event and the high school has also used Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation funds to sponsor after-school Zumba for students and staff.



Ms. Carrie Mitton Named Heart of Learning Finalist

Ms. Carrie Mitton was surprised with the Heart of Learning Award during a recent staff meeting at East Vincent Elementary. Pictured are Dr. Cheryl Bell, Dr. Joel DiBartolomeo, Ms. Carrie Mitton, Ms. Mai-Linh Hoang and Dr. Kathryn Soeder.

Her dedication, creativity, and professionalism earned Ms. Carolyn (Carrie) Mitton a Citadel Heart of Learning finalist award. The Citadel Heart of Learning Award is a nationally-recognized program through Citadel Banking and the Chester County Intermediate Unit designed to honor and thank Chester County’s teachers while raising awareness of the impact that their hard work and dedication have on students, families and the entire community.

Faculty, students and staff indicated to the nominating committee that Ms. Mitton puts her heart into everything she touches and is routinely extraordinary. A peer nomination read “She amazes me with her professionalism, focus,



dedication, and creativity. She is truly a teacher who cares about each and every student, adapting to their personalities and needs...” Ms. Mitton is a shining example of commitment and service to kids. Ms. Mitton was presented a check for \$500 to be used for her classroom along with the award.

Fifteen finalists, one public school teacher from each of the 13 public school districts in Chester County, one teacher from the Chester County Intermediate Unit and one teacher from a Chester County non-public school, were chosen from the nominations and were recognized as Citadel Heart of Learning finalists. Each finalist received \$500 to use in their classroom. From

these 15 finalists, three winners (one high school, one middle school and one elementary school teacher) were awarded with the Citadel Heart of Learning Award and an additional \$1,500 to use in their classrooms.

Emmy Award-Winning Cook Christina Pirello Visits West Vincent Elementary

Healthy Earth, Healthy Food, Healthy Bodies was the take-home Earth Day Celebration message for students at West Vincent Elementary School. On May 3rd, internationally-known author, television host and health food activist, Christina Pirello, worked with local farmers Sam and Ann Marie Cantrell of Maysie’s Farm Conservation Center in Chester Springs to demonstrate through hands-on cooking that healthy farms create healthy food. Maysie’s is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the importance of conservation and ecological thinking. The concept of “eating close to the source” is something Pirello values as she demonstrates in one of her award-winning cookbooks “Cooking the Whole Foods Way”.

The Earth Day celebration gave students plenty of opportunities to explore human relationships with the earth. More than 20 presenters were on-site demonstrating and interacting—many generously volunteering their time and knowledge for their 3rd year, including Lewis Environmental, Miller Farm, Chester County Recycling, French Creek State Park, Green Valleys, and Warwick County Park. New presenters included Chester County Food Bank, Cucina Verde, Chester County Bee Keepers, Trout Unlimited, Anselma Mill, Camp Hill, the Bluebird Society, and many more. Topics of discussion ranged from toxic spills and how they are handled to the benefits of organic gardening.

The day expanded on the “reduce, reuse, recycle” theme to bring attention to everyday choices that kids and adults can make to have a positive global impact. Sixth grade students kicked off a Green Lunch Initiative contest for the entire school to reduce the amount of garbage produced during school lunch by throwing less away, making smart choices in food selections, and packing lunches with reusable containers.

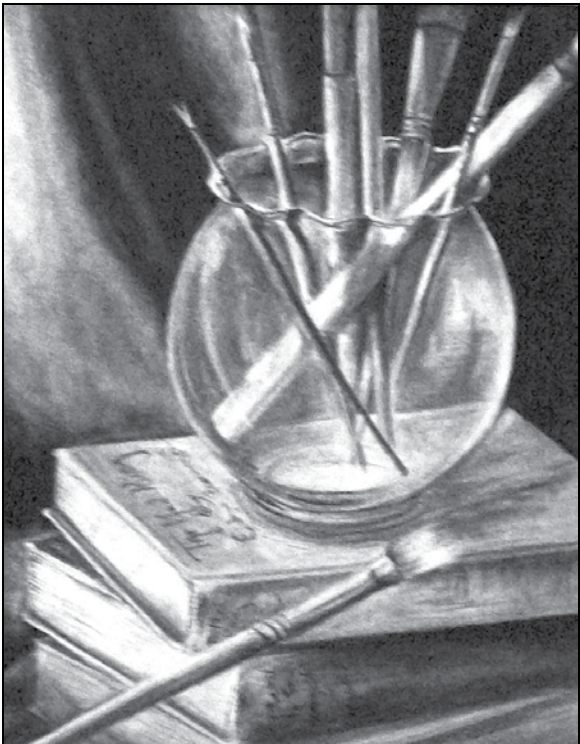
Best Buddies Sprint for Spring 5K

Runners to your mark! 75 runners joined the Best Buddies Fit for Life “Sprint for Spring 5K” this year, held on May 1 at the high school campus. Proceeds benefit Owen J. Roberts Best Buddies, an organization that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



Art Takes Center Stage at High School

View more student work and see show results at ojrsd.com.



Left: *68 Years* by Katie Starliper
Above: CD cover by Kira Zhu



Above: *Jewel Bug* by Cassidy Jameson
Left: *Eye of the Tiger* by Jordan Caplan
Below: *Disturbed* by Lindsay Haibach



Above: *Square* by Airel Raban
Right: *Leaves* by Randi Hladik



Left: *Liber-Braiden* by Mary Reisenwitz
Above: *Renoir Vase with Flowers* by Georgia Brum
Right: *Flowers in a Jar* by Hanna Rineer



Falling in Love with Peas

Each year on March 17 “The Wearing of the Green” tradition at Owen J. Roberts becomes a “Go for the Greens” celebration. It is a chance for students to have good experiences with good food. Instead of being harped on to “finish your peas”, kids get plenty of opportunities explore how enjoyable green vegetables can be. In an attempt to be slightly outrageous when confronting healthy food, elementary kids may be greeted by their principal dressed as a giant vegetable, try to guess ingredients in a spinach-based smoothie, or dare one another to “try” foods they may not otherwise ever touch to their lips.

Peas, Love and Happiness was the theme for this year. The high school

student government food committee arranged for high school students to participate in a fear-factor-style chilled pea soup trial. At French Creek and West Vincent Elementaries, students were greeted in the morning by Giant Pea Pods who, upon closer inspection, turned out to be school principals Mrs. Malinda McKillip and Mrs. Barbara Guy. Even the newest members of the West Vincent family - babies of teachers-donned tiny pea pod costumes. And the crowd in the cafeteria at East Coventry broke into the type of thunderous applause one would expect for a teen idol when pea-clad principal Todd Oswald entered the room. These gestures all prove to children that vegetables are not a punishment!



(L to R) Jessica and Nathan Hengst, Principal Mrs. Barbara Guy, and Jessica and Jake Capece

The PTA was instrumental in creating these school-wide celebrations, working closely with building wellness teams and the District Wellness Council. Students in grades K-8 tasted sugar snap peas in the cafeteria. PTA volunteers prepped and passed out the peas to help cafeteria staff.

Surveys show increased vegetable consumption following student taste-test opportunities. All students in grades K-6 took home snap pea seeds

to plant and grow their own as part of the Owen J. Roberts “Growing Our Future” program that helps kids understand where their food comes from. A parent brochure with growing instructions and snap pea recipes were sent home for parents to extend the fun.

The Go for the Greens campaign is generously funded by the Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation as part of their mission to improve the health of the next generation.

Exchanging Ideas



Celia Martin, Kimberton Waldorf Garden Coordinator, demonstrates the honey-making process at one of the school's hives.

Recently, participants in East Coventry's REACH Program had a tasty and fun-filled afternoon at Seven Stars Farm and the Kimberton Waldorf School. East Coventry REACH students were treated to the organic yogurt that is made at Seven Stars Farm. They learned about all the special care that goes into making organic food and, more importantly, what does not go into an organic food.

At the Waldorf School's garden classroom, students had the opportunity to see how food is grown and used for school lunches. They connected food to food production by sampling honey straight from the hive and tasting apple chips that had been dehydrated from fruit trees growing directly outside the class-

room. The visit was part of the students' studies on “Food and Community” as they work to find real solutions to address hunger in the community.

Arbor Day at Warwick Park

Fifth grade students at French Creek celebrated Arbor Day with a day of outdoor school at Warwick State Park. Students enjoyed the beautiful outdoor setting of Warwick Park while rotating through Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science stations. The activities allow students to measure tree rings, write descriptively, measure the crown spread of a tree, and plant new trees where older trees have died. Students and parents enjoyed this “TREEMENDOUS” outdoor educational experience.



Garden Tour and Unique Plant Sale

OWEN J. ROBERTS FRIENDS OF THE ARTS

SATURDAY, MAY 21 - 10:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

(Rain Date: Sunday, May 22 - same time)

Highlight: Student Artists at eight gardens

Honorary Chairman: Dr. Fred Winter

On Saturday, May 21, from 10 AM to 4 PM, the OJR-FOA will host their Annual Garden Tour. An added attraction will be the sale of unusual and unique plants grown not only by garden enthusiasts, but by professional hybridizers and prize-winning hobbyists. The potted plants for sale will include Japanese larch, pawlownia, Eastern Red Cedar, Cedrus deodora, prize-winning hemerocallis plants, as well as hybrid bulbs, scented geraniums, and much more.

The nine gardens on this year's tour will include the private gardens of two exhibitors at this year's Philadelphia Flower Show. Also exhibited is a “Premier Garden” included in the Smithsonian Archive of American Gardens. For the first time, student artists from Owen J. Roberts High School will be playing a vital part in the Garden Tour. They will be painting on-site at eight of the nine gardens, and guests will be able to view their paintings in progress.

Maps showing the garden and plant sale/luncheon locations are on sale now. The admission cost per map is \$10.00. Children 12 and under FREE. Maps will be available at the following locations:

- OJR Admin. Bldg. - Routes 100 and 23 - Monday to Friday School Hours Only
- Agway Garden Center and Agway Farm Store - Route 100 at Pughtown Road
- Ludwig's Corner Hardware - Route 100 near 401
- Kimberton Bistro - Kimberton
- Kimberton Whole Food Store - Kimberton
- The Coventry Tea Room - Route 23 just west of Route 100
- The Bakery at St. Peters Village
- Shear Heaven Salon - 70 West Main Street - (Route 23) in Elverson
- Clair's Family Restaurant - Main Street (Route 23) in Morgantown
- Saturday, May 21st from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. outside the OJR Administration Building

Pouring Rain - it's NO.....Drizzle we GO!

'Suggestion: Please wear comfortable shoes, sunscreen, and a sun hat

Luncheon from 11:00 to 2:00 at St. Peter UCC, Knauertown. Plant Sale located in church pavilion.

Philadelphia Independence Visits French Creek Elementary

Contributed by Mrs. Kelly Bergan, French Creek Elementary Life Skills Teacher

On Wednesday, April 13th, players from the Philadelphia Independence visited French Creek Elementary. The Philadelphia Independence is the first team in women’s professional soccer to become an official President’s Challenge Advocate. As the team is busy getting ready for their second season, players and staff have been out in the community visiting schools and youth recreation programs to promote healthy lifestyles, emphasize the importance of academic excellence and education, and encourage the growth of character and leadership.

The students at French Creek Elementary enthusiastically welcomed the Philadelphia Independence soccer players into their school. They enjoyed having a book read to them followed by an engaging conversation about health, wellness, and nutrition. As a President’s Challenge Advocate, the Independence will promote the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA) in the greater Philadelphia community, and support the First Lady’s “Let’s Move” initiative. PALA requires youth participants, ages 6-17, to engage in physical activity for 60 minutes, five days per week, for six out of eight weeks. Everyone who completes the requirements receives a PALA certificate of achievement signed by co-chairs of the President’s Council, NFL quarterback Drew Brees and Olympic gold-medal gymnast Dominique Dawes.

“PALA is a great motivator for healthy, active lifestyles among youth,” said Danielle Duff, Philadelphia Independence Outreach Manager whom also visited French Creek. “PALA is an awesome program to be involved with, and we are both honored and excited to be a President’s Challenge Advocate.”



French Creek Elementary students (L-R) Cory Wright, Kelsey Brobst, Macy Wright, Quinn Kratz, and Natalie Keegan pose with Philadelphia Independence players Allison Falk and Lauren Fowlkes.

Mock Crash at Owen J. Roberts High School

On Tuesday, May 3, the Owen J. Roberts High School junior and senior classes attended a Mock Crash Event held on main campus. The staged automobile crash scene became live theatre creating a realistic demonstration of what happens at an accident scene when drivers may have been under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or even distracted while driving.

The presentation, featuring professional actors from the Media Theatre as well as OJR student actors, was sponsored by State Farm Insurance in cooperation with Paoli Hospital and the Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital’s Cruisin’ Not Boozin’ Program. Goodwill Ambulance, Ridge Fire Company, Pennsylvania State Police, and local municipal police worked together over the past months to plan the event, which they hope will encourage responsible driving behaviors among the community’s youth. A medical helicopter landed at the scene to bring realistic drama to the experience. Following the outdoor presentation, the students returned to the high school auditorium for a Cruisin’ Not Boozin’ assembly.



More photos can be viewed at Ridge Fire Company’s website, www.ridgefirecompany.com.



Students and staff at the Middle School demonstrate that it is not easy to get back up if drugs, tobacco and alcohol get you down during a recent “Take Down” drug, alcohol and tobacco prevention program.

Photos by Mrs. Janice Houck

Owen J. Roberts High School Students Set New State Record at Odyssey of the Mind State Finals Competition

April 9th, 2011, eight Owen J. Roberts teams representing each of our seven schools competed in the Pennsylvania Odyssey of the Mind State Finals held at Williamsport Area High School in Williamsport, PA. Of the eight teams competing for our district, five earned the right to move on to compete in the Odyssey World Championships, May 27th through May 30th in College Park, Maryland: the high school, middle school, East Vincent, North Coventry, and French Creek elementary schools.

Odyssey of the Mind is the world's largest problem solving competition. Teams of students chose to solve one of the five long-term problems and are tested with additional "spontaneous" problems during each contest. The combination of long-term and spontaneous scores determines which teams ultimately place and move on in the competition.



Owen J. Roberts Odyssey students smiling at the hotel after a successful day of problem-solving competition.

The highlight of the competition came when the high school team set a new state record. Several of our Odyssey teams compete in structural engineering problems. This year's dilemma involved creating a weight-bearing structure with a mass of 18 grams or less, built of balsa wood and glue, that fit within the confines of a 3½ x 2¼ x 25 inch area. The high school team's device supported 1,390 pounds - only 120 pounds shy of the world record. Congratulations to Andrew Rajtik, Kelsey Dielman, Steven Dallas, Brittany Simmons, Zach Matarazzo, Cassidy Hart and Collin Sager for their fine showing in the competition! We wish you well in your quest for a new world record.

For the fifth year Owen J. Roberts is grateful for the generous support of Diamond Credit Union who helps to fund Odyssey educational opportunities for students.

Council on Foundations Eyes Owen J.

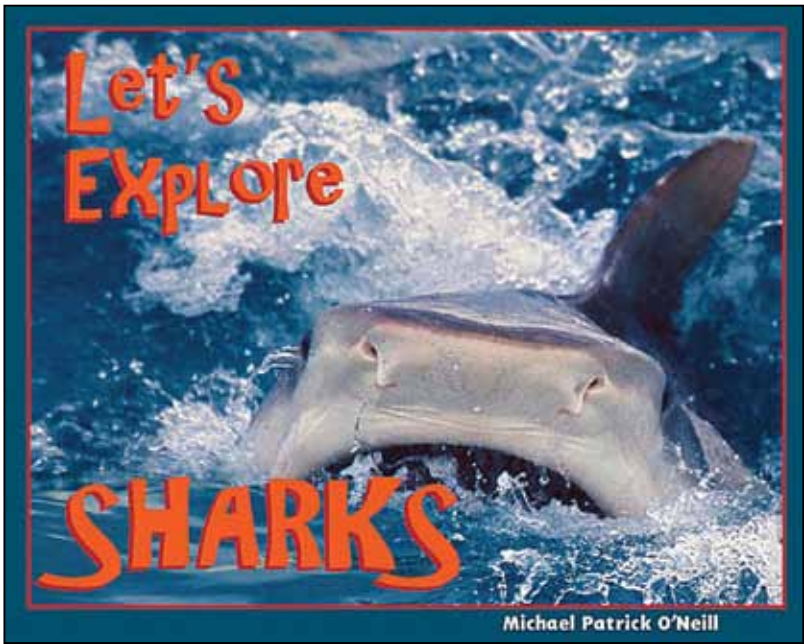
On April 11, 2011, Owen J. Roberts was featured as an off-site location for the National Conference of the Council on Foundations, which was held this year in Philadelphia. More than 40 foundations from across the country signed up for this tour, sponsored by the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation, for a first-hand look at the impacts a health foundation can have in a community.

Representatives from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Lance Armstrong Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kraft Foods Foundation, and other prominent grant makers visited North Coventry Elementary School for a sampling of how the District uses grant funding to affect positive change in the health outcomes of students. Highlighted on the tour were Ms. Kathryn Bell's active math class, kindergarteners planting in the gardens, and a student yoga demonstration in the outdoor pavilion.

Utilizing funds through the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation, this year 90 children from North Coventry School have participated in an after-school program called "Yoga for Kids" taught by Certified Child Yoga Instructor, Mrs. Barbara Kosciwicz, owner of High Street Yoga and Wellness. The North Coventry Wellness Team coordinates this activity as a way to offer outlets for children who may experience stress in the hurry-up world in which we live. Combining strength, flexibility, breath work, focus, and balance, yoga offers physical activity in a way that is personal and noncompetitive. The goal of the program is to offer children lifelong strategies to live healthier lives in a fun and playful way.

The visitors from the Council on Foundations learned about child yoga and many other strategies Owen J. Roberts uses to help students adopt habits that will enhance lifelong health. Many vowed to take the practices they learned back to their own schools and communities to join in the national movement in creating a healthier generation.

World-Renowned Photojournalist Visits Middle School



Photojournalist Mr. Michael Patrick O'Neill visited the middle school on May 5th. Sponsored by the PTA, Mr. O'Neill presented writing workshops to both the 7th and 8th grades. Mr. O'Neill travels extensively as a photographer and writer, concentrating primarily on sea life and environmental issues. His work, widely published, aims to educate and to communicate to others the beauty, diversity and fragility of the oceans - and the urgent need to protect them.

Beauty and the Beast

Adapted from an article by Sheila Gleason, grade 9, for the high school newspaper, "The Gavel".

With late night rehearsals, costume fittings, flying lessons, and homework, the cast of Beauty and the Beast worked tirelessly. The show was full of magical effects, including dancing objects, amazing sets, and flying! The show tells the story of a cursed prince who must learn to love someone for who they are and earn their love in return. The show starred Cat Henry as Belle and Collin Gray as the Beast. Other major parts included Alex Galambos as Lumière the Candle, Stephen Maurer as Cogsworth the Clock, Brittany Jackson as Mrs. Potts, and Dane Duncan as Gaston.

With 3 months of rehearsal, the cast of Beauty and the Beast demon-

strated incredible dedication for the production to be a success. "At first the rehearsals were intense, but now that we're all getting the hang of it, it comes easy and it's just fun to be there," said sophomore Maizy Moyer.

The cast traveled to all five OJR elementary schools to perform, and they also hosted a character breakfast on March 19. The character breakfast let people get a closer look at what the actors and actresses worked on for three months. There were preview performances, a coloring contest, storytelling, autographs, and a chance for children to have their picture taken with cast members at the breakfast.



Every little girl was a princess and every young boy got to be a prince at the Beauty and the Beast cast breakfast event.



District Calendar Highlights

MAY

May 30, 2011 Memorial Day - School Closed

JUNE

June 10, 2011 Graduation for Class of 2011

June 13, 2011 Student Full Day

June 14, 2011 Half Day

June 15, 2011 Last Student Day, Half Day

June 16-17 Teacher Professional Days

BACK TO SCHOOL 2011-2012

Monday, August 29 First Student Day

Don't Miss:

- FOA Garden Tour and Plant Sale, May 21 (see page 5 for more information)
- Seventh Annual OJRHS Film Festival, May 25, 7 PM HS Auditorium
- Battle of the Bands, May 31st 7:00 - 9:30, HS Auditorium
- Laurelwood Fit for Life Family Swim, Thursday, June 2 (Thursday, June 9 rain date)

Check www.ojrdsd.com for more details



- Congratulations to OJRHS World Language Honor Society Inductees and to OJRHS National Honor Society Inductees
- The High School, Middle School, East Vincent, French Creek and North Coventry Odyssey of the Mind Teams qualified for World Competition to be held May 27 through 30th at the University of Maryland.
- 4500 Dgital Video Contest Winners: Best Sound Nomination and Winner - Ted Keffer - SWAG Films - Film: Hextra, Best Line of Dialogue Winner - Andy Zielinski - Hands Free Productions - Film: To Whom it May Concern, Best Directing Winner - Courtney Fusselman - Armless Robot Productions - Film: Up and Down
- Greenfield Youth Film Festival Awards: Bringing home 2nd place for Best Narrative Film, Don Kurtz and Mike Briglia for "Bryan Benton's Bad Day". Winning Individual Honors for Best Screen Play, Craig Hacker for the film "After the Bombs". Winning Individual Honors for Best Actor (Only one female and one male were presented an award in this category), Mary Reisenwitz for her part in the film "Up and Down", Jake Bieber for his part in the film "Up and Down".
- Owen J. Roberts DECA won the following awards at the 2011 International Career Development Conference (ICDC) in Orlando, Florida: Amanda Mirabile, TOP TEN international finalist in International Business Plan for her plan to market LNG to Taiwan; Collin Gray/Alec Edgecliffe-Johnson, TOP TEN international finalist in Hospitality Services Team Decision Making Event. Other Owen J. Roberts DECA members competing included: Kira Bartlett in Internet Marketing Plan and Zachary Matarazzo/Michaela Shaw/Stephen Baeu Dallas in the Entrepreneurship Written Event. The Owen J. Roberts delegation competed against 15,000 DECA members from all 50 states and many foreign counties including Guam, Puerto Rico, Canada, Mexico, Dubai, and Germany.
- Reflections Program Winners: the following are winners from OJR at the State level and they will be advancing to the National level:

Photography

Kelsey Netting - Senior - 3rd - HS

Film

Allen Gift - Primary - 1st - FC

John Buckwalter - Intermediate - 1st - NC

Helen Armstrong - Senior - 2nd - HS

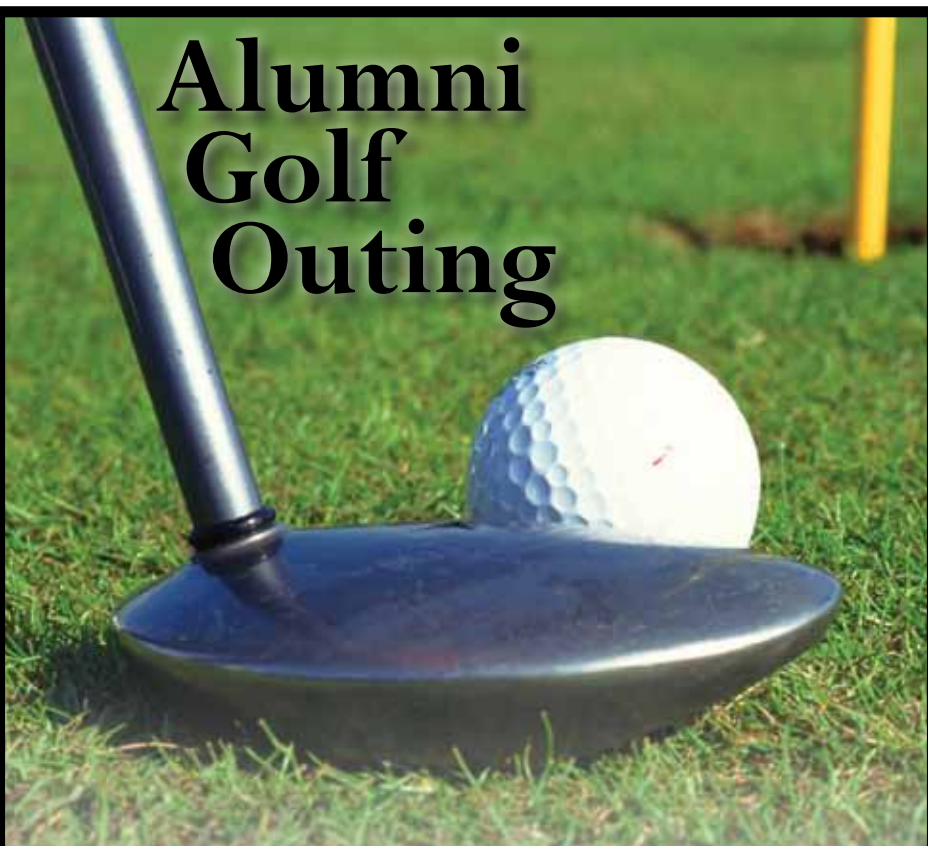
Dance

Suraj Sharma - Primary - 2nd - FC

Grace Murray - Junior - 1st - EV

Kelsey Netting - Senior - 1st - HS

- County Science Fair - The following students were award winners in the Chester County Science Fair and will move to the next level- the Regional Science Fair: East Coventry - Eric Hughes; East Vincent - Anna Dempsey; Grace Murray; French Creek - Rachel Scull; North Coventry - Ciera McFarland, Matthew Rantz, Ryan Moser; Middle School - Kyle Kirsten, Ben Yankelitis, Kaya Gentile



Whether your experience at Owen J. Roberts was a recent accomplishment or a distant memory, everything you appreciated about the school district remains. We're still a gem in the countryside, promoting better educational opportunities for a community of intelligent, talented, and engaged students.

The Owen J. Roberts Education Foundation's Alumni Golf Outing will be held on Wednesday, September 28, 2011 at the Bellewood Golf Club. This is a perfect opportunity to reconnect with your fellow alumni while helping to raise funds for the Owen J. Roberts community.

SAVE THE DATE – September 28, 2011

For additional details please contact Dr. Kathleen M. Hocker khocker@ojref.org or 610-469-5333.

The OJR Education Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization. All contributions are tax deductible.



Photo by Mrs. Janice Houck

The Middle School Varsity Singers, under the direction of Mrs. Cheryl Markofski, performed the national anthem to a sold out crowd of 45,609 at Citizen's Bank Park before the Phillies game on May 7. The students performed remarkably and were entertained themselves by the Phanatic's antics.