

# PARENTS' PAGES



Blue Hills Regional Technical School  
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## **BHR EARNS COMMENDATION FROM STATE FOR STUDENTS' MCAS SCORES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

Blue Hills certainly has a great deal to be proud of when it comes to its students' recent major academic milestones.

Not only was the school among 188 statewide to earn "Commendation School" recognition from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for raising students' academic achievement levels and closing academic achievement gaps, but Blue Hills also was one of 11 schools to exit accountability status, which means that the school met its annual student performance benchmarks in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math for two consecutive years. (Schools that fail to do so for two or more consecutive years are given accountability status.)

In addition, Blue Hills had the highest level combined increase in MCAS performance of any other high school in the state. Blue Hills' sending districts include Avon, Braintree, Canton, Dedham, Holbrook, Milton, Norwood, Randolph and Westwood.

Blue Hills' students' MCAS scores rose 12 percentage points in ELA, 17 in Math; for a combined increase of 29 percentage points.

Academic Coordinator Jill Rossetti explained that at the suggestion of former Acting Academic Coordinator Joe O'Brien [now a Blue Hills consultant], Blue Hills' MCAS prep classes were eliminated in favor of embedding academic concepts and MCAS-related training into English, science, math and history classes. Teachers also set aside specific days each week for reviewing test-taking strategies and questions.

There were after-school MCAS readiness programs funded through academic support grants to help students who needed it, said Rossetti, and ninth-graders were targeted for help by looking at their eighth-grade MCAS scores to see their specific areas of difficulty and input from their teachers. Clearly, the new strategies worked well overall and produced excellent results.

Rossetti credits the extremely high degree of cooperation and input from several groups and people associated with the school for pitching in wholeheartedly to make this outcome possible. She mentioned Superintendent James P. Quaglia, the school's other administrators, her administrative assistant Susan Toner, parents, substitute teachers, After-School MCAS Coordinator Eileen Dailey, the special education staff, and many others as well who all gladly did their part.

"Everyone really takes this very seriously," Rossetti said. "The Blue Hills family community makes this [effort] work. We shine because of everybody working together."

Superintendent Quaglia said, "The thanks go to many, especially our teachers for their understanding of the changes necessary to bring about these results, as well as their diligent professional practice. Truly the integration of MCAS-related content and practice questions into daily instruction has paid huge dividends. Quaglia added, "Thanks also go to Jill Rossetti, new last year as Academic Coordinator. Her leadership and understanding of complex state and federally-mandated procedures is commendable in itself."

## GERMANO JOHN SILVEIRA WINS SCHOOL COMMITTEE SEAT FROM BRAINTREE

Germano John Silveira was elected to the Braintree seat on the Blue Hills Regional District School Committee on Nov. 2, 2010. The position was vacated when Robert Kimball, the previous Braintree representative, moved out of the District.

Silveira, 19, is a student at the New England Institute of Art.



### PARENTS' PAGES

BHR District School Committee Members:

**Francis J. Fistori, Chmn**....Avon  
**Germano John Silveira**..Braintree  
**Aidan G. Maguire, Jr**.....Canton  
**Joseph A. Pascarella**....Dedham  
**Robert S. Austin**.....Holbrook  
**Festus Joyce**.....Milton  
**Kevin L. Connolly**.....Norwood  
**Richard Riman**.....Randolph  
**Charles W. Flahive**.....Westwood

**James P. Quaglia**  
*Superintendent-Director*

**Michael J. Barrett**  
*Assistant Superintendent-Principal*

**Judy Bass**  
*Editor*

## BHR'S NEW ASST. SUPT. / PRINCIPAL IS MR. MICHAEL J. BARRETT

"The more I see, the more I want to be here," said Michael Barrett enthusiastically after his first week on the job at Blue Hills as its new Assistant Superintendent / Principal.

"I like to provide opportunities, both academic and vocational, to students," he said. "That drew me to this school."

He fills the vacancy created when former Assistant Superintendent / Principal James P. Quaglia was appointed Superintendent.

Barrett, 44, brings 23 years of experience in education to his position. A graduate of Duxbury High and Stonehill College, he holds a master's degree in education from Lesley College, and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) in Educational Leadership and Management from Fitchburg State. He taught in Ireland for a year, and among his other credentials, Barrett was the technology coordinator / integration specialist in Middleboro for grades 4, 5, and 6, taught history and coached at Notre Dame Academy in Hingham, taught history and computer technology in Marshfield for 11 years, and was dean of the high school in Weymouth. Additionally, he coached many sports including baseball, basketball, soccer, and softball.

He is married to an elementary school teacher. They have an eight-year-old daughter.

Barrett thought that his background and interests would make him an ideal fit for Blue Hills, a feeling that has been borne out during his first hectic days there. He has spent time talking to staff and students, listening to their ideas, and walking around the building visiting classrooms and technical areas. Clearly, he is energized by what he has noticed so far, and plans to be a hands-on, highly involved administrator who facilitates the implementation of new ideas by working shoulder-to-shoulder with everyone in the Blue Hills Regional school community.

There's no doubt about what the bottom line is for him. "I'm always for the kids and what is best for them," Barrett said. He's spoken informally to students to get their feedback on subjects like developing a fresh new look for the school's lobby.

He wants to help in reaching out to middle school students and their families in Blue Hills' nine-town district (Avon, Braintree, Canton, Dedham, Holbrook, Milton, Norwood, Randolph and Westwood) to inform them about all the opportunities available at the school so they will consider applying, and is eager to do whatever is necessary to "bring Blue Hills to the next level."

## OPEN HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, NOV. 17 FROM 6 TO 8:30 P.M.

When you think of major occasions at Blue Hills, the ones that probably come to mind first are Graduation, Senior Scholarship and Awards Night, the National Honor Society induction and the Adams Scholars ceremony. All those are extremely important events for our school, but the one which showcases the entirety of Blue Hills at its very best, from academics to technical education to extra-curriculars, is the annual Open House. **It will be on Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2010, from 6 to 8:30 pm.**

It's a wonderful opportunity for us to invite the public, especially prospective students and their families, to view Blue Hills close-up. People can visit our technical programs and academic classrooms, tour the whole school, speak with students, administrators and faculty, gather information, and spend an enjoyable night finding out more about the superb educational opportunities we have to offer. We take immense pride in helping young men and women build their future and realize their dreams. In fact, that is at the heart of our reputation for excellence. I hope that you will join us for this special event to see why students have been eagerly coming to Blue Hills for more than forty years to receive the most outstanding vocational-technical preparation available in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Superintendent-Director James P. Quaglia



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR ATHLETES AND COACHES

Congratulations to all the Fall Sports athletes and their coaches for representing themselves and Blue Hills with so much capability and sportsmanlike dignity throughout the season. You played hard, trained well for every match-up, and went out there every time with determination and enthusiasm. On behalf of the entire school, thank you for the excitement you gave us and for doing a truly outstanding job.

Kudos also to our All-Stars: **Volleyball**, Samantha Barone, Amanda Edwards; **Girls' Soccer**, Jessica Vieira, Michaela Adams, and Meg Delaporta; **Boys' Soccer**, Derek Cahill, Derek Walker, and Matt Keenan; and **Golf**, Dave Rota. Bravo to all!



## CULINARY ARTS STUDENTS HELP AT OKTOBERFEST IN DEDHAM

Students in the Culinary Arts program at Blue Hills were a big part of the success of the 4th annual Oktoberfest held on the grounds of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Endicott Estate in Dedham on Sept. 19.

Seventeen sophomores, juniors and seniors participated in the gala event including 10<sup>th</sup> graders Dan White, Timothy Kenney, Melonie Fedorchuk, Emilie Burns, Kendrick Kidd, Felicia Muszynski, Dacarra Williams, and Dariesha Carpenter-Bowers; 11<sup>th</sup> graders Brendan Morrison, Melisa Varitimos, and Anthony DeFrancesco; and grade 12 students Gregory Variste, Jose Melendez, Ashleigh Wynne, Ryan Aucoin, Derek Ehrhardt, and Sean Walsh.

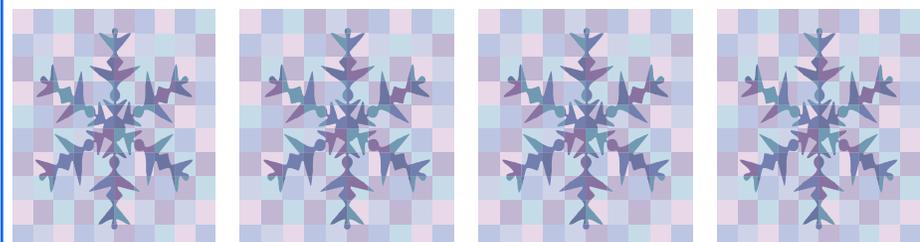
According to Chef John Haelsen of Dedham, a Culinary Arts instructor who helped at the event and oversaw the students' work – along with his Blue Hills Culinary Arts program colleagues Susan Carter (lead teacher) and David Green - their role included initial production of the food during the week prior to the event, preparing all food from scratch, and transporting it and serving it off-site.

Among the delectable items available to the public were a selection of foods such these from Blue Hills: pulled pork, sausage, peppers and onions, baked beans, macaroni and cheese, cole slaw, french fries, homemade chicken tenders, brown bread, and corn bread. A variety of tasty German foods were on hand as well.

The experience “gave the students a different perspective by working outside the normal educational setting, ‘taking their show on the road,’ in a sense,” explained Haelsen, “while maintaining a high standard of food service sanitation and professionalism.”

**If it is necessary to cancel or delay the opening of school for storms or emergencies, parents and guardians will be notified by phone using the ConnectED message system. Announcements will also be made on local radio station WBZ-1030, as well as on local TV stations such as Channels 4, 5, and 7.**

**Thank you very much for your attention.**



## LOBBY ARTWORK DISPLAY

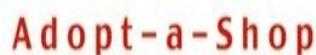
There is a very unique and beautiful display of wood carving in the lobby in a glass case to the left of the double doors that lead to Student Affairs, Guidance and the Vocational / Co-Op office. The outstanding artwork was done by a gentleman who has had a longstanding relationship with Blue Hills virtually since the inception of this school. He was the Avon representative to the School Committee many years ago, and was President of the Blue Hills Foundation, to cite just two of his previous positions.

His name is Mr. Bernard Baher, he lives in Avon, and he is 90 years old. The display is titled “From Nine to Ninety” to commemorate his life-long passion for doing this type of sculpture. In fact, the pieces on display represent his work from childhood to the present day, hence the title. We are very grateful to Mr. Baher for allowing us to show these sculptures to the public. He also did the stunning gilded eagle that is on permanent display in the corridor outside the Finance office.

The display will be up until early January 2011.

### SCHOOL CALENDAR

- Nov. 24** Thanksgiving recess begins  
11:35 am dismissal
- Nov. 29** School reopens
- Dec. 23** School vacation begins at  
end of day
- Jan. 3** School reopens
- Jan. 17** School closed for Dr. Martin  
Luther King Day holiday
- Feb. 9** In-Service, 10:40 am student  
arrival
- Feb. 21-25** Winter vacation, no school




Blue Hills Regional Technical School

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to Adopt-a-Shop, make your check payable to The Blue Hills Foundation. Send it to The Blue Hills Foundation, 800 Randolph Street, Canton, MA 02021. All donations are tax-deductible. Adopt-a-Shop is a program that provides funding for tools and equipment for the students of Blue Hills. Any contribution, be it large or small, is very welcome and greatly appreciated. Visit [www.Adopt-a-Shop.com](http://www.Adopt-a-Shop.com) to learn about it. Thanks to all!

## ANDREW LAFERRIERE OF HOLBROOK EARNS EAGLE SCOUT STATUS

Andrew LaFerriere of Holbrook, a junior studying Electrical, has attained the rank of Eagle Scout.

LaFerriere was awarded a badge, scarf, and an Eagle Scout medal in a ceremony at St. Edward's Church in Brockton on October 10.

In addition, at the Blue Hills Regional District School Committee meeting on October 5, he was presented with certificates of commendation by Supt. James Quaglia and District School Committee Chairman Francis Fistori. He has also been given a letter of recognition by the District School Committee.

Joseph Pascarella of Dedham, Vice Chairman of the District School Committee, said, "As an Eagle Scout, I know the dedication, hard work and leadership it takes to earn this award. Only three per cent of all Scouts achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. Andrew is to be commended for his accomplishment."

According to the Boy Scouts of America web site, Eagle Scout is the highest rank in Scouting. To earn that designation, a Boy Scout must advance through the following ranks in this order: Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle. He must also earn 21 merit badges including First Aid, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communications, Environmental Science, Personal Fitness, Camping, Family Life, Personal Management, Emergency Preparedness or Lifesaving, Cycling, Hiking, or Swimming, and others.

One of the other requirements is doing a service project for a religious organization, school, or the community. LaFerriere's service project was sprucing up the religious education office at St. Joseph's Parish in Holbrook. According to Gidgette Farrell, Director of Religious Education, the small office was dark and not especially inviting or functional. With some assistance from his father, LaFerriere painted the walls, built shelves, and removed an old sink. As a result, Farrell said, "The space is so much more functional now, and it's a pretty blue, not drab and dark."

## ENGINEERING STUDENTS BUILD THE FUTURE

Talking to Blue Hills Regional Engineering Technology students Keny German of Randolph, Brandon Phillips of Randolph, and William Manning of Milton is like talking to three young men in college. Their intellectual sophistication and mastery of the fundamentals of their course, titled "Civil Engineering and Architecture," is uncanny for students still in Grade 11 in high school.

In fact, the exceptionally lofty caliber of their work prompted their instructor, Dan Hamill, to say that although he has been in the engineering field for 25 years, it would be hard for him to surpass the excellence of the detailed tabletop model they constructed for an imaginary engineering wing to be added on to the front of the Blue Hills Regional building on Randolph Street in Canton.

The complex assignment involves structures that will never actually be constructed; however, the standards these and the other students in Hamill's and Dr. Michael Meyers' Engineering Technology classes must meet are very real. They have to develop proficiency using 3-D computer software; understand the principles of digital electronics; be able to read and produce blueprints; and evolve into a crop of dynamic young professionals representing the next generation of engineers by the end of their time with Hamill and Meyers.

The multi-phase project done by German, Manning and Phillips was not only time-consuming (the model alone took two whole weeks of full-day labor to bring to fruition), but demanding in many ways.

They (and the other juniors in their class) began this rigorous project last year. They were required to do a survey of the proposed 78-foot by 101-foot site for the two-story, 15,000 square-foot building, take into consideration the space needed for labs, desks and furniture, classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, and other necessities, put together a scale model made of balsa wood and foam board with features like tiny interior lights that actually go on and a curving indoor staircase, have patience and practice good teamwork so all the tasks could be equitably divided, allowing the group to meet their deadline; and demonstrate an understanding of the architectural design process.