

## Northern Highlands Regional High School

Allendale • Upper Saddle River • Ho-Ho-Kus • Saddle River • April 2012

[www.northernhighlands.org](http://www.northernhighlands.org)



### ROBOTICS TEAM REPORTS SUCCESS...

The Northern Highlands Robotics Club once again competed in the First Tech Challenge, a competition sanctioned by First Robotics ([www.usfirst.org](http://www.usfirst.org)). In this year's competition, teams had to design a robot that could pick up racket balls, place them in a small crate and elevate the crate as high as possible. The best performing robots could raise their crate to a height of almost 10 feet even though the robots themselves had to fit into an 18 inch box! To score extra points, the robot could also push a bowling ball up a hill and then set it in a four inch hole. In an autonomous portion of the competition, the robot attempted to accomplish tasks without any human assistance.

Northern Highlands Robotics participated in three competitions. In the first, at Liberty Science Center, our robot did not perform very well, but by watching the other teams, we learned a lot about our robot's weaknesses and how we could improve. After the competition, we made significant changes to the robot's abilities and refined our techniques to make ours function reliably.

In the second competition, our robot was much better. We were in first place at the lunch break, and ended up finishing third. This high finish qualified us for the State Finals at NJIT.



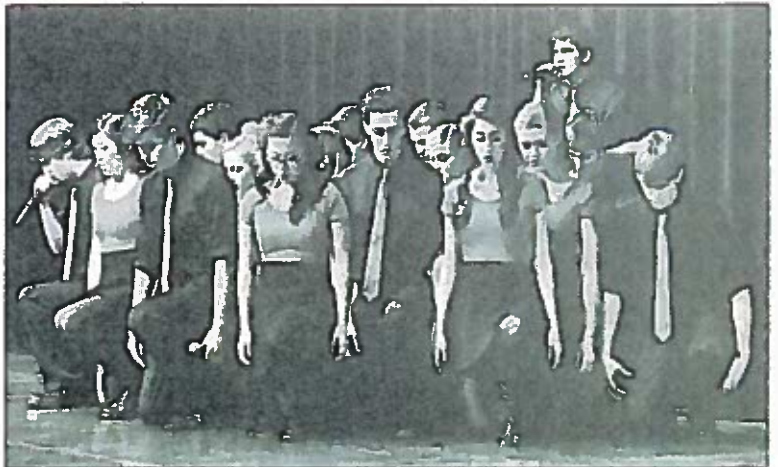
At the State Finals, we performed very well. In a field of 48 of New Jersey's best teams, we were at or near the top of the leader board all day, and were chosen to be part of the number one seeded alliance for the final eliminations. During the eliminations, we won the first round, but were defeated in the semi-finals. We are encouraged, however, that the team that beat us did so with the highest score achieved in the state and possibly in the country.

After finishing next-to-last in the previous year, this year, we finished with a trophy as State Semi-Finalists. A full page story was written about us in the "Town Journal" and published on [NorthJersey.com](http://NorthJersey.com). All of our members were thrilled to be a part of this year's success, and we look forward to being even better next year!

### TWO FOR TWO!

The Highlands Voices won the Mid-Atlantic States A Cappella title and will be participating in the Finals of the International Championships of High School A Cappella on April 27.

For the second year in a row, you can watch the Highlands Voices on TV when they compete in the MSG Varsity Talent Show. If they are going to win, they will need your help! The show aired on April 22 at 8PM (Cablevision channel 14) and can be viewed online. Log on to [www.msgvarsity.com/talent-show](http://www.msgvarsity.com/talent-show) to view and VOTE, VOTE, VOTE for the Highlands Voices. Voting is open to all and lasts for four days after the show airs. Then, watch the show on April 29 at 8 PM to see if the Highlands Voices advance. If you keep voting, they will keep advancing until they are crowned MSG Varsity Talent Show Champion.



## BUDGET BRIEF

- ❖ For the second year in a row, our Debt Service expense will decline. The additional decrease is \$53,000.
- ❖ A further restoration of state aid provides an additional \$77,517 for programs and services.
- ❖ The budget reflects a \$200,000 decrease for utilities due to facility and natural gas purchasing initiatives.
- ❖ There will be an increase in Special Education costs.
- ❖ Continuation of last year's Special Education Extraordinary Aid initiative will result in \$346,000 of aid, an increase of \$158,000.
- ❖ Continued restoration of teaching and guidance positions lost when state aid was eliminated in 2010-2011, including a Math Supervisor.
- ❖ Administrative costs continue to remain below state mandated cost per pupil. Our cost is the lowest of all regional high schools in central and northern New Jersey.

## BUDGET PRIORITIES

- ❖ maintaining appropriate class size
- ❖ curricular offerings
- ❖ instructional supplies
- ❖ career and college counseling
- ❖ technology and maintenance upgrades
- ❖ school security, health and safety
- ❖ professional development
- ❖ co-curricular offerings
- ❖ facility maintenance

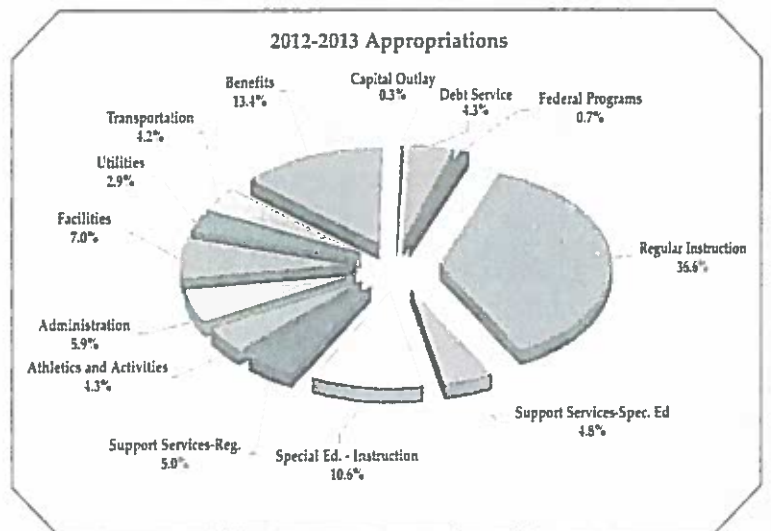
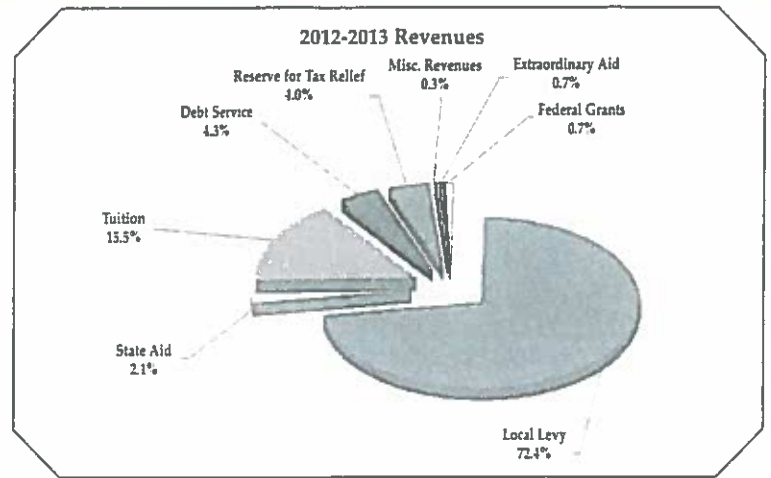
## Despite Challenges, Highlands Restores Instructional Staff in 2012-2013

School funding remains in a state of flux. While state aid was further restored for next year, the state continues its initiatives to take back large portions of this aid through indirect assessments. Through such assessments next year, the state will take back \$309,720 or 55% of the \$562,356 in categorical aid it has promised the district. This leaves the district only \$252,636. Overall, net state aid remains below levels of seven years ago.

Last year, Northern Highlands implemented major fiscal initiatives as part of a long-term financial plan to address this fiscal instability. Through restructuring of our debt, creation of reserves and enhanced management of our resources, we provided the district the security and flexibility to preserve the exemplary Northern Highlands educational experience, while providing tax savings to our community.

This year, we have augmented our long-term financial plan by beginning the development of an energy savings plan. This plan will enable us to identify and implement facilities enhancements that will save both energy and dollars in the long-term. To begin development of our energy savings

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## TAX LEVY

### Allendale:

#### 2012-2013 (Next Year)

Average Home Assessment: \$619,492.00  
Increase per month in dollars: \$ 8.40

#### 2011-2012 (This Year)

Average Home Assessment: \$540,942.00  
Decrease per month in dollars: \$ -7.63

### Upper Saddle River:

#### 2012-2013 (Next Year)

Average Home Assessment: \$750,000.00  
Increase per month in dollars: \$ 3.96

#### 2011-2012 (This Year)

Average Home Assessment: \$755,280.00  
Increase per month in dollars: \$ 13.13



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## Despite Challenges, Highlands Restores Instructional Staff in 2012-2013

plan, we obtained a \$14,000 grant from the Board of Public Utilities to perform an initial energy audit of our facilities. The audit is now complete, and we anticipate formal issuance of a final report in April.

We are pleased to report to you that the State Department of Education has recognized the benefit of our various initiatives. In its recent annual mid-year review of school district efficiencies, it wrote "we applaud your efforts in managing the district's resources."

The budget for 2012-2013 is designed to support and preserve the Northern Highlands educational experience through continued prudent financial management and planning. With a net levy increase of only \$352,808, we are pleased that this budget will provide sustainable restoration of 70% of the instructional and support staff lost when state aid was eliminated two years ago.

## CHANGE IN ANNUAL BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTION DATE

On January 17, 2012, Gov. Chris Christie signed Senate Bill 3148 into law. This bill gave communities the option of moving the school elections from their current date, the third Tuesday in April, to the November General Election. The move places school board candidates on the November ballot, and eliminates the annual vote on proposed school budgets that are at or below the state's 2% tax levy cap.

The change to November school elections could have been made by the board of education, the municipal governing body, or through voter referendum. During the February 6, 2012 public board meeting, the Northern Highlands Board of Education adopted a resolution moving the election to November.

Members of the school board whose terms would have expired after the April 2012 election will continue to serve until the board's organization meeting, which will be held the first week in January 2013.

School board races will remain non-partisan, and candidates' names will appear on a separate section of the November ballot. The change in the school election date will remain in effect for at least four years, through the November 2015 election, after which there is an option of changing it back to April.

In connection with the November school board member elections, candidates will need to pick up a nominating petition (the document that places your name on the ballot) and return it to the County Clerk by the June 5th deadline.

If you have any questions, please call the Board Office: 201-327-8700, ext. 273.

## Cultural Diversity Week

Recognizing that one of the great riches of a community is its cultural heritage, Northern Highlands Regional High School World Languages Department recently celebrated our cultural heritage the week of March 12-16, in which the entire student body participated. I'd like to share with you details about the events we had planned:

Monday through Wednesday evening, films were shown in Hopkins Hall at 7 p.m., to increase global awareness. The kickoff for the week was the 2009 film, *Speaking in Tongues*. We considered the broad implications of speaking more than one language in America as school students in San Francisco became bilingual in an immersion program. Brad Siegel, quad-district curriculum coordinator, led a discussion on the topic. Tuesday and Wednesday evening, students enjoyed the award-winning foreign films *Inch'Alla Dimanche* and *También la lluvia*.



On Wednesday morning, a student assembly treated Highlanders to a performance by Chinese musicians. "A Musical Journey to China" was performed by a chamber ensemble based in New York City, and brought to us in part by the Music and Performing Arts Association. The performance was interwoven with demonstrations and audience participation. An ensemble of musicians playing the erhu (2-string fiddles), zheng (long zither), pipa (lute), yangqin (hammered dulcimer) and percussion instruments to create musical images and descriptions of Chinese folklife and culture.

On Thursday evening, March 15, our festivities culminated in an evening Showcase of Cultural Heritage, during which Highlands students sang, danced and performed musical selections from various parts of the world. These performances were followed by an international food court in the main cafeteria, where students and community members sampled various ethnic foods from all areas of the globe, courtesy of Highlands language students. Any surplus food from Thursday night was brought to a local soup kitchen Friday morning.

Highlands students and language teachers also coordinated a children's crafts table Thursday evening with an international focus. In addition, there was a donation box in the cafeteria inviting people to make a donation to Rose Foundation of Haiti, a humanitarian organization committed to helping the people of Haiti. The Rose Foundation of Haiti was founded in 2009 by Pierre Romain, of the Allendale Bar & Grill. It is one of The Rose Foundation's objectives to achieve lasting victories over striking poverty plaguing Miragoane, Carrefour, Port Au Prince, and so many other areas of Haiti.



On Friday, in certain language classes and during both lunch periods, a representative from AFS (American Field Service) accompanied by Marta Castillo Peinado, who is Highlands' exchange student from Spain, visited language classes all day, and was in the cafeteria during both lunches to talk to interested students to learn more about study abroad.

Television Production classes also ran interviews during the morning videos of Highlands faculty and students, who spoke about their background and heritage, and one special detail they wanted students to know about their country.



Visit [www.northernhighlands.org](http://www.northernhighlands.org) for all current information on activities and athletics.

# CONGRATULATIONS!



- ❖ Girls Swimming - State Sectional Champions and Big North Divisional Champs
- ❖ Boys Bowling - Bergen County and State Sectional Champions
- ❖ Girls Basketball - Big North Divisional Champs and County Tournament Finalist
- ❖ Wrestling - Big North Divisional Champs and State Sectional Finalist
- ❖ Girls Fencing - Co-League Champions



## Bergen County Coaches of the Year

Al Albanese (Girls Basketball)

Rich Smith (Boys Bowling)

Tom Viscardi (Girls Swimming)

## NEW JERSEY HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR



Emily Masters discusses Issue 5 of *The Highland Fling* with members of the editorial board after school in Room 211. To her left sits junior Jessica Ma, who, with Gina Palermo, will be taking over as Editor-in-Chief for the 2012-2013 school year.

Senior Emily Masters was named the 2012 New Jersey High School Journalist of the Year in March. This prestigious award is sponsored by the Garden State Scholastic Press Association and the New Jersey Press Foundation, and comes with the Bernard Kilgore Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$5,000.

This award automatically enters Emily into competition for the National High School Journalist of the Year award, sponsored by the Journalism Education Association.

Adviser John Wodnick said, "Emily has been an outstanding journalist for *The Highland Fling* since her freshman year, and has teamed with senior Gloria Norton in leading an excellent edition of the student newspaper as Editor-in-Chief this past year." In addition to her role as a leader on the student newspaper, she has also been freelancing for *The Town Journal* since August 2011.



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## NEW CHALLENGES, NEW CURRICULA TO TEACH MEDIA

In today's information society, students are bombarded with text, images, and video from all angles of their lives. Open and free access to information online has its advantages for education, but it also requires careful and ongoing instructional attention. These challenges, as well as many other demands to expand students' reading interests and skills, formed the development of a 2011-12 Library and Media Curriculum Guide.

The Quad Districts assembled a team of diverse educators to create a curricular vision for media education, set of broad instructional goals, and scope and sequence for grades K-12. Working together as a Quad led to a spiraled curriculum based on four key literacies: reading, information, media, and technology. The curriculum writers were composed of media specialists and classroom teachers from different educational backgrounds, all working together toward two common aims: 1) defining what educational experiences prepare students for 21st century learning in media education, and 2) determining how the media specialists, media centers,



and classroom teachers from each subject area come together in meeting these goals.

Representing the high school, media specialist, Julie Goldberg, and English teacher, Lisa Hart, participated in three days of professional development to write curricula. Specific curricular interests at the high school, designed to enhance students' media education, include constructing and critiquing media texts, guiding students to navigate online tools for information with specific research strategies, and investigating controversial global and social issues in the media context. For example, one lesson module developed for an eleventh-grade health class guides students to review various websites and forums with medical information in order to help a student, hypothetically, make a serious decision related to obesity. The committee wrote several lessons, and will continue to develop modules, which set media education in real-life scenarios in which students apply literacy skills taught throughout the curricula.

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### *Art and Literary Magazine Wins National Recognition*

The 2010-2011 Northern Highlands Art and Literary magazine, *The Loch and Quay*, won the National Council of Teachers of English Highest Award. Only 38 of these were given in the entire country, and only one Highest Award was given in the state of New Jersey, this year.



The issue was called *It Will Be Fanciful; then Quiet*, and featured the best of Northern Highlands' artists and writers, including items that won over forty outside awards in both art and writing. Editors were 2011 graduates Tyler Davis and Toni Gasparis, and assistant editors were graduate John Daniel, current senior Emily Masters and Junior Eleanor Hutchinson.

Editorial staff consisted of Achsah Abraham, Sara Barrack, Samantha Bennewitz, Danielle Blackmore, Jade Bonacolta, Ryane Davis, Michael Ezrokhi, Emily Greenberg, Diana Lagamarsino, Jessica Ma, Breanne Meier, Allie Rocovich, Alyssa Scull, Sarah Shepp, Melissa Valente and Betty Varghese.

Faculty advisors were Svea Barrett, Mary Florio and Lisa Hart.

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### Highlanders Take The Stage...



**The Wedding Singer**

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Thank you to our Home & School Association for contributing to the cost of this publication.

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# NORTHERN HIGHLANDS HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2012

## Alumni

Susan Brison (1972), Distinguished Alumna  
 Greg Miller (1973), Cross Country and Track  
 Roy Preefer (1973), Wrestling  
 Stephen Amidon (1977), Distinguished Alumnus  
 Barbara Haviland Minor (1977), Distinguished Alumna  
 Greg DiFelice (1985), Distinguished Alumnus  
 Jeannie Krauter (1985), Field Hockey and Basketball  
 Liz Scarry (1991), Field Hockey  
 Rob Reeder (1992), Cross Country and Track  
 Anny Madden (1993), Soccer

Dax Strohmeyer (1995), Football  
 Phil Stolt (2000), Tennis

## Team

1973 Football, NBIAL & North 1 State Sectional Champions

## Contributors

Frank DeLuise, Special Education Teacher and Coach  
 Chuck Dombeck, Community Volunteer  
 Mike & Bobbie Kunisch & Family, Community Volunteers  
 Jim Sok, Physical Education Teacher and Coach



*Hall of Fame Induction Banquet*  
*Sunday, May 6, 2012 at 12:00 P.M.*  
*Seasons, Washington Township, New Jersey*

*Cocktail Hour • Buffet Dinner • Induction Ceremony*  
*Beer • Wine • Soda • Cash Bar*  
 Tickets: \$75 per person

Visit our website for ticket information: [www.northernhighlands.org](http://www.northernhighlands.org)



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Northern Highlands Regional High School District

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