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## Newsday.com

### 'Surgi dolls' are just what the doctors ordered

MICHAEL R. EBERT

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Students at Nassau BOCES Joseph M. Barry Career & Technical Center in Westbury recently created 400 "surgi dolls," which are used by doctors to explain medical procedures. As part of the project, Barry Tech teamed up with Project Sunshine, a nonprofit that aids children facing medical challenges.

"This is the first time an entire school on Long Island has participated in this project," said Caitlin Moses, the organization's senior program coordinator.

To create the dolls, Nassau BOCES teens joined forces to stencil, cut, stuff and sew. One hundred dolls will be split between Winthrop-University Hospital in Mineola and Schneider Children's Hospital in New Hyde Park.



"To me, the most rewarding thing is to see the young men coming from carpentry, electrical and auto to thread a needle and wonder who will get the doll they're making," said school psychologist Shelly Rebaudo.

### HICKSVILLE

100th anniversary

St. Ignatius Loyola School in Hicksville - which officials say is the oldest Catholic school in the Diocese of Rockville Centre - recently held a "Curriculum Night" as part of the school's yearlong centennial celebration. More than 300 students performed songs and lectures outlining each decade the school has existed.

"It gave them a better understanding of how much things have changed over the last 100 years," said first-grade teacher Krista Harris, who coordinated the celebration with co-worker Kathy Lawniczak. "These walls have witnessed a ton of cultural changes with each passing generation."

Harris said students - pre-K through grade 8 - researched everything from candy to music to clothes. In addition, the school held an essay contest in which students shared their fondest memories at St. Ignatius Loyola. Three winners were chosen from each grade.

## JERICHO

### Diversity Day

Jericho Middle and High School students celebrated their cultural differences last month through a mixture of poetry, song and dance performances. "Diversity Day," an hourlong festival, featured acts in languages including Chinese, Korean and Hindi.

"These are Jericho students performing for other Jericho students; that's what makes this so fascinating," said Elisa Weidenbaum, the middle school's Diversity Club adviser. "It's an opportunity for everyone to show off their cultures."

At the middle school, 45 performers in grades six to eight presented 18 acts. One highlight, Weidenbaum said, was a community service lecture given by three students who recycle, visit nursing homes and aid refugees in Darfur.

"To see these students - some of whom have limited English skills - speaking and performing in front of a mostly English-speaking audience is a courageous thing," she said.

## LEVITTOWN

### Darwin Day

Division Avenue High School recently participated in its first Darwin Day, the international celebration of science and humanity that is a project of the Institute for Humanist Studies. As part of the project, 15 students competed in science-themed contests in honor of Charles Darwin, the scientist who laid the foundation for the theory of evolution.

"Science is an international language, and the central organizing principle in biology is evolution," said Alison Offerman-Celentano, the school's science chairwoman. "We celebrated the knowledge Darwin contributed to humanity."

One contest, "Beaks of Finches," had students design artificial bird beaks out of folders, glue and straws and compete to see which picked up the most seeds. Another contest, Offerman-Celentano said, explored the evolutionary concept of the "missing link" by having students guess missing ingredients in cookies. The idea, she said, was that the cookies were new and different while retaining some of their "primitive" traits.

"One student made chocolate chip cookies without the chocolate chips," she said. For her recipe, "I withheld the vanilla extract, but no one guessed correctly."

## ROOSEVELT

### Black History

Roosevelt High School celebrated the feats of African-Americans last month through performances that highlighted the Harlem Renaissance, civil rights movement and Generation X. The Souls of Black Folk event drew more than 100 community members, the biggest crowd in its 10-year history.

"Children today are so far removed from the civil rights era that their intensity has changed," said Eme Funderburke-Ivey, the district's community arts director. "Productions like these keep it fresh in their minds."

Funderburke-Ivey said a group of 37 students from grades nine to 12 engaged in African song and dance, the Lindy hop and the jitterbug with era-appropriate clothing such as grass skirts and tuxedos.

"We want to show people there are positive qualities here at Roosevelt," she said.

## WESTBURY

### O Ambassadors

Powell's Lane Elementary School students are participating in the O Ambassadors program, a joint venture coordinated by the Oprah's Angel Network and Free the Children, a children's advocacy group. As part of the project, 22 student ambassadors will spearhead fundraisers to fight poverty and improve education, health and development in East Africa.

"Students, particularly in a diverse community, need to understand they have the power to change the world," said Josephine Hall, who teaches English as a second language.

Since October, Powell's Lane ambassadors have raised more than \$1,600 through a dollar drive, a change drive and a Valentine's Day-themed pen sale. This spring, they will pair with students in Ecuador for a scrapbook exchange, in which cultural newspaper clippings and student writings and drawings will be mailed back and forth.

"It was tough to pick our ambassadors," said Hall, noting 150 students applied via essay. "In some cases, we chose students who only wrote a paragraph, but were very passionate."

## ISLANDWIDE

### Prudential Awards

Four seniors from Long Island are among 102 state honorees and 234 distinguished finalists nationwide for the 2008 Prudential Spirit of Community Award from [Prudential Financial](#).

Jennifer Zwilling, a senior at Jericho High School, was one of two state honorees. Diagnosed with Tourette syndrome at age 7, she founded the National Tourette Syndrome Association's Youth Ambassador Training Program, which educates youngsters about the neurological disorder. To date, she has trained more than 100 teenagers from all over the United States, spoken at 56 schools and testified four times before Congress.

Among New York's eight distinguished finalists are Meredith Burecyk of Northport High School, Jason Mogen of Half Hollow Hills High School West in Dix Hills and Samantha Williams of [Walt Whitman High School](#) in Huntington Station.

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