

Polyglot

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Pinellas County Schools

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Best wishes from the Office of World Languages for a happy and healthy new year.

News From the Schools

Clearwater HS held their French and Spanish National Honor Society Induction ceremonies November 14. **Nadia McDonald**, French teacher, worked very hard to provide her students and the community the opportunity to see Eric Vincent, Parisian performer, in concert. The successful event took place November 16.

Pinellas Park High School's French Club, under the leadership of **Annette Coller**, celebrated French week by decorating the mall area of the school. Activities culminated with a proper "fete".

Seminole High School's Spanish Honor Society,

sponsored by **Livia Wein**, has been very active. Fall functions included a visit to the Dalí Museum, the stuffing and delivery of bears to the Morton Plant Cancer Clinic and a very popular holiday-gram fundraising project.

Laura Sosa and Jean Ziesmer have been working hard at Gibbs High School to utilize parallel assessments in Spanish levels 2, 3 and 4 as part of the standards-based instructional model. Their work to build the upper levels of Spanish includes application for a new Spanish Honor Society chapter and the school's first ever AP-

Spanish Language class next year.

Largo High School continues to develop their small learning community known as "The Global Community" around a focus on the connection between language study and careers.

Northeast High School is proud of French teacher, **Eric Jarvis**, who was honored by Patricia Hauer, assistant principal, for encouraging students towards original and creative thinking. According to Hauer, Eric's work with his students each day is evidence of his enthusiasm for intellectual exploration.

Kudos to our Colleagues

Congratulations to **Marianna Steriadis**, Tarpon Springs HS, who was invited once again by the College Board's Advanced Placement Program and Educational Testing Service to serve as an AP reader at this year's annual AP Reading. Marianna will join nearly 11,000 college faculty and AP teachers from around the world in June who will gather at five different sites to evaluate and score about 10 million free-response answers.

Congratulations to **Pam Benton** (Spanish Teacher, Boca Ciega HS) and **Darlene Lebo** (Spanish teacher, Lakewood HS) for passing the strenuous **National Board Certification** process.

WLTA Report

Submitted by Sylvia Amaya, president

The WLTA Board would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a Healthy, Prosperous and Happy New Year!!! As WLTA starts the new year, we would like to report the good news we have shared over the past several months. WLTA presently has 96 active members and is working hard to reach the goal of 100 members. If you are not already a member, please send your dues (\$15.00) to Celia Rubí, Boca Ciega HS, pony #5.

On November 2, WLTA held their fall social with the intent to raise money for the Carmine Zinn Scholarship Fund. I am delighted to share that the money raised by the social, combined with the designated \$5.00 taken from the \$15.00 dues, we were able to meet our goal of \$1,000 towards a scholarship in Carmine's name. Besides the successful fund raiser, teachers and their guests enjoyed a night of camaraderie and good food. The WLTA Board and International Day Committee are busy preparing for the 2008 International Day to be held March 8 at Meadowlawn MS. We hope to see you there wearing your WLTA polo shirts. Thank you for all your support and constant commitment to helping WLTA provide positive experiences for world language students.

Teachers of World Languages Change Lives

New beginnings provide us with the chance to reflect on the opportunities we have each day to positively impact the lives of students. We don't always see the evidence when the student is sitting in our class. Sometimes we don't hear back from the student years later. But we do leave an impression on each student. We open minds and hearts through the study of language and culture and we arm our students with a new skill and the confidence to use it. The letter below is from a student who did take the time to write back...to his middle school Spanish teacher, Beverly Fessenden. We share this letter with the hope that it reminds you that students like this sit in your classroom every day and appreciate your more than you know.

Hola! This is a former student..... I was the shy quiet kid in your class. It has been roughly 5 years since I was in your class, and a lot has changed over the years. I am now 18 and preparing for college, and am actually planning on majoring in Spanish. I didn't realize it when I was in your class, but Spanish has become an essential part of my life. My best friends who I regard as my brother and sister are from Puerto Rico and Cuba, and after moving to Vermont last year, where there are no Latinos, I realized how much I missed the language and culture of Latin America. To date, I was actually hired by the local high school to teach an after school Spanish class, am fluent and speak Spanish like a native speaker, and even learned Italian, Latin, Arabic, and German. But my passion isn't solely for the language, but also the culture. It was quite an honor when my "brother and sister's" parents officially "adopted" me into their families and said "that you are-now Latino like us." But I would like to personally thank you for giving me the foundation in Spanish. I'll admit, I had a lot of trouble trying to grasp Spanish while in your class, but now I realize that you never gave up on me, and how very beneficial that was to me. I can't thank you enough señora, your guidance and all that you did for me, as a student, is beyond words. I never thought that I would have a full blown conversation in Spanish with my Latino family or that I would be listening to Celia Cruz while I write this letter to you, let alone majoring in Spanish in college! I owe it all to you señora, and if all goes well, I might return to Florida to attend USF, in the fall. I would love to hear from you, either through one of the e-mail addresses listed at the bottom of this letter, or by regular mail. Thank you for everything, and I know what it is like to try and teach little gringos who could care less about Spanish, but you never know what kind of impact you can have on a student. The impact you had on me, has shaped my life, for the better, and I am eternally grateful for that!

Congratulations to....	Welcome To Our Wee Ones!
Carmen González, master Spanish teacher at Clearwater High School, has made the decision to retire next week at the end of the semester. Carmen has mentored numerous colleagues and guided countless students to higher levels of Spanish at Clearwater. Her students will miss her creative and engaging instruction. We will miss the enthusiasm for teaching she demonstrates each day. We are also so pleased for Carmen that she is giving herself the gift of time after a very successful career. Best wishes, Carmen.	Stacey Padovan , Osceola HS June 22, 2007, Jay Porter Padovan , 7 lbs. 4 oz., 21" long Crystal Rockne , Dixie Hollins HS July 27, 2007, Conlan Thomas Rockne , 10 lbs. 4 oz Jessica Fresia , Riviera MS November 11, 2007, Nicolas Joseph Fresia , 9 lbs. Kathryn Olivero , Largo HS, Baby Girl