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# GO *the Bangor* COMMUNIQUE

Schools Working for Academic Excellence

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Summer 2004



**GOSPEL:** The BHS Jazz Choir, performing in the nave at the Riverside Church in New York City, site of the March 26th Heritage Music Festival.

## Music Competes at National Event

by Scott Burditt

More than two hundred Bangor High School musicians competed at the national Heritage Music Festival in New York City. Each of our eight performing groups played for a panel of nationally known judges, receiving valuable critiques and comments. Students also saw sights in the city and attended several Broadway shows *(Continued on page 14)*

## Bangor Launches Pre-K Program 2004-2005 to see pilots in three schools

This fall, three Bangor schools will open pilot Pre-Kindergarten programs alongside regular classes. These Pre-K pilots will have limited enrollments; students will be randomly selected from the pool of applicants. The Pre-K program will serve children who have turned four prior to October 15, 2004. The program is designed to provide pre-K opportunities for the growing number of Bangor children who would otherwise enter kindergarten without attending pre-school. In the past year, as many as 50% of students entered kindergarten with no prior pre-school experience.

Pre-K instruction will be strongly oriented toward building language skills and quantitative concepts through an active and experiential class structure. Social skills of classroom interaction will be emphasized. Importantly, the classroom will be educationally focused, even in play activities. Lastly, the program will provide regular out-of-class activities designed to broaden children's awareness of their community, including field trips to the grocery store, airport and library.

Downeast School will be home to both morning and afternoon Pre-K pilots, while Vine Street School and Abraham Lincoln School will each host morning sessions. Each class will be instructed by a certified early childhood teacher.

## Special Feature: Space Studies

### The Stars in Bangor Schools

Through a series of developments across Bangor's K-12 curriculum, space, the stars and an understanding of the universe in which we live has become an increasingly important and exciting feature of the instructional landscape in Bangor Schools. The construction of the observatory at Bangor High School, the opening of the Challenger Learning Center in Bangor, NASA training opportunities pursued by Bangor faculty and a passion for space studies held by many teachers across the school community have combined to create a coherent progression of student experiences that provide Bangor students with a truly unique opportunity to explore their universe. This feature documents this constellation of experiences across Bangor Schools, showcasing the events that have punctuated space studies this year, as well as demonstrating the place of space studies in the K-12 curriculum. The Communique thanks the many contributors who submitted materials for this feature.



**STELLAR EYEBALL:** The Ring Nebula as observed through the 12-inch Newtonian telescope at BHS.

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### Space Station "Lands" at Fairmount

by Ellen Holmes

On January 15<sup>th</sup>, Fairmount School participated in a prestigious event, linking students via satellite feed to the International Space Station. In preparation for this big event, students researched the International Space Station and life in space. Classes also prepared questions for the astronauts.

Fairmount students packed the school gym. Community members and Maine legislators also attended. Suddenly, a dramatic voice came through the speakers. "This is Mission Control in Houston, are you receiving?"

During the live feed, two astronauts spoke with students through real-time video. The astronauts fielded 25 questions. Between responses, the microphone floated between the astronauts. Students inquired about such topics as the scientific experiments conducted aboard the ISS, day-to-day life at the station and the "earthly" things the astronauts missed most.



**LINKED:** Robin Kennedy, Flight Director at Challenger Learning Center, and Mike Michaud, US Representative, joined Fairmount students for the International Space Station satellite link up. Students included (back row, left to right) Zakiah Meeks, Kiersten Currie and Megan Six as well as (front row, left to right) Kathryn Laverdiere and Holly Legere.