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It's Not Just Bethpage's Problem

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Those waiting for the country's largest toxic groundwater plume to be remediated might as well think they're in geological time.

Hydrogeologists say the plume could be moving at about one foot per day, maybe more.

One study suggests it will take more than a century and hundreds of millions of dollars to clean it up fully.

In the meantime, stakeholders and technical experts gather, remediation plans are proposed (and have been put in place), monitoring wells are drilled, and politicians have their say.

But the years pass, and the plume keeps on traveling. It is now threatening water supplies far southeast of its origins, approaching the Southern State Parkway.

And please don't call it "The

Bethpage Plume." The "Grumman-Navy Plume" is more appropriate, said more than one speaker at one of a series of public meetings held this spring to discuss the decades-old contamination affecting the Magothy Aquifer that supplies much of Nassau County's drinking water needs.

County Legislators Laura Schaefer and Rose Marie Walker and Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joseph Saladino organized an informational meeting at the Bethpage JFK Middle School that featured presentations from officials of the Bethpage Water District (BWD).

Less than a week later, many of the same attendees/speakers could be found at the twice-annual meeting of the Resolution Advisory Board (RAB), instituted to keep the public abreast of the remediation efforts against

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DEC Remediation and Materials Management Deputy Commissioner Martin Brand (foreground) joked that he had been on Long Island so often to deal with its water issues that he ought to find an apartment there. Sitting beside him at the Bethpage JFK Middle School auditorium was Legislator Rose Marie Walker. (Photo by Frank Rizzo)



Berner Middle School Spanish teacher Janice Kincaid welcomed back former student Daniel Annunziato to help her seventh-graders with their speaking skills. (Photo courtesy of the Massapequa School District)

Boost For Language Instruction

To help her world language students improve their speaking skills, Spanish teacher Janice Kincaid recently brought in a special guest to meet her seventh-grade students at Berner Middle School.

The final exam includes a speaking section, in which students have to carry on conversations in Spanish on three different topics. Daniel Annunziato, who graduated from Berner in 2015 after two years of Spanish instruction with Kincaid, returned to help the students practice for their final. He worked with small groups on fluency.

Annunziato consistently had the highest average in his class and was also the recipient of the Philip A. Fulvi Love of Language Award. During a project in which students had to research charities that work with either Hispanic communities or Spanish-speaking countries, he was able to personally connect with the director of an organization based in South Florida for his presentation.

"He is somebody that the students can look up to," Kincaid said. "It's motivating for them as he's only recently been through the same process."

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