



# LHS NEWS

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*LHS News*

*Designed by*

**Madeline Bove**

Mr. Prescott's  
Litchfield High School  
Desktop Publishing Class

## From the Principal's Desk...

*Dear Reader,*

I would be remiss if I didn't open by thanking you for your patience and understanding during our recent closing. As you are now well aware, student safety was a major factor in the Town's and the superintendent's decision-making, and we are particularly grateful to First Selectman Leo Paul and his team for getting us back in session as soon as possible.

Enclosed are several articles written by our staff regarding recent happenings within our school. Thank you all for taking the time to inform our parents of the various academic and extra-curricular opportunities you provide for our students.

**NEW MID-TERM EXAM SCHEDULE** - Please note our new 2011-2012 mid-term exam schedule, which will be posted online and is included in this publication. Originally conceived by high school staff members, this schedule allows for school to remain in session for a full day while also administering mid-term exams. The length of the exams will be adjusted to accommodate our 80 minute instructional periods, and the weight of the exams will remain the same.

If you haven't already, please visit our district website to sign up to receive e-mail notifications about events and announcements based on categories of your choosing. Constant Contact, our electronic communication system, allows us to efficiently send you information regarding clubs, organizations, athletics or upcoming events at our school.

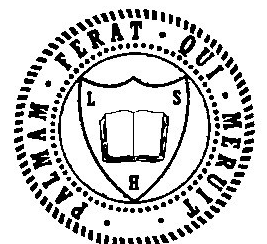
Some important dates to remember:

- ◇ *Marking Period 2 mid-point, December 7, 2011*
- ◇ *End of Marking Period 2, January 18, 2012*
- ◇ *Mid-term exams, January 19, 20, 23, 24 (NOTE: SCHEDULE CHANGE ON WEBSITE)*
- ◇ *Report cards issued, January 31, 2012*

As always, we strongly encourage you to use PowerSchool effectively to monitor your son's or daughter's progress. Though grades are accessible 24 hours a day, teachers verify their accuracy twice a marking period: at mid-point and at the end. Any one assignment can result in a significant fluctuation in an overall average, and if you have any questions, you should contact the teacher directly. For any issues with accessing or navigating PowerSchool, contact your school counselor at 567-7534.

Sincerely,

Principal



*Volume 14, Issue 1, December 2011*

## LHS Crafts Class Creates Bowls

### to Feed the Homeless

October was Hunger Awareness Month and Litchfield High School crafts class integrated a pottery unit, a visit from a local potter, and a fundraiser to learn how to create bowls for charity purposes. The fundraiser is called Empty Bowls and is sponsored by The Torrington Soup Kitchen to help raise money for the homeless.

Guy Wolff, a well-known local potter, visited the crafts class. Teacher Marsha Berkun commented that he is as important to the pottery field as Alexander Calder is to art. In fact, he knew Alexander Calder, and discussed this with the students as he demonstrated throwing pottery on the wheel. The students were impressed with his skill and his stories about living within an artist community. Guy donated the two dozen bowls he threw for his demonstration to the high school crafts class to glaze and fire for the fundraiser.

The crafts class chose several methods for creating their bowls; coil, thrown, or slab. The bowls were designed using sgraffito, glaze, and mishima techniques.



## French Classes Create "Prehistoric" Cave Art

Madame Staffiere's French 4H class has been studying prehistoric France, in particular the caves of Lascaux and Cosquer. These caves house hundreds of paintings of animals and represent man's early attempts at art, dating back 20,000-30,000 years. In the spirit of the original artists, the students crafted their own cave walls out of clay and painted them using only natural materials.

## NEW@ LHS

### Library Media Center!

We offer the following magazines for staff and students - come check them out!

- ◇ *BMX Plus* - **NEW!**
- ◇ *Connecticut Magazine*
- ◇ *E - The Environmental Magazine* - **NEW!**
- ◇ *Educational Leadership*
- ◇ *Games*
- ◇ *Health*
- ◇ *Mental Floss - Where Knowledge Junkies Get Their Fix* - **NEW!**
- ◇ *National Geographic*
- ◇ *Newsweek*
- ◇ *Psychology Today*
- ◇ *Seventeen*
- ◇ *Sports Illustrated*
- ◇ *Sports Illustrated for Kids* - **NEW!**
- ◇ *Transworld Skateboarding* - **NEW!**
- ◇ *Teen Vogue* - **NEW!**

**New fiction has arrived!!** ➔

Come check out some of these popular authors!

- ◇ T. A. Barron - *The Merlin's Dragon* series
- ◇ Meg Cabot - *Avalon High Coronation, Volume 2*, *The Box Next Door*, and *The Darkest Hour*
- ◇ Eoin Colfer - *Airman and The Time Paradox*
- ◇ John Flanagan - *The Complete Ranger's Apprentice* series
- ◇ Margaret Peterson Haddix - *Among the Impostors*, *Claim to Fame*, and *Because of Anya*
- ◇ Pete Hautman - *All In*, *Big Crunch*, *Blank Confession*, *Doppelganger*, *Godless*, *Hole in the Sky*, and *How to Steal a Car*
- ◇ Anthony Horowitz - *Battles and Quests*, *Beasts and Monsters*, and *Crocodile Tears*
- ◇ Dan Gutman - new titles in the *Baseball Card Adventure* series

**Plus...**more from Laurie Halse Anderson, Sarah Dessen, Gail Giles, Erin Hunter, Brian Jacques, Gordon Korman, Christopher Paolini, and Jonathan Stroud.



## Student Council Off to a Busy Start

This year's student council officers got an early start on their planning efforts for the year when they attended a four day leadership workshop in July. All council members then volunteered the last of their summer days to help stock classrooms and faculty work rooms with books and supplies.

In October, this group organized a well-attended Autumn Fest, even with last minute adjustments because of wet weather. The lobby and hallways were decorated with a barn-like atmosphere, complete with a constructed stage for the bands and open mike musicians.

The officers are also helping to plan a first ever middle school Autumn Fest with the middle school advisors, Ms. Ouellette and Mrs. Smaldone. The high school classes will run the games so the middle school students can focus on the fun of participating.

The annual Lyman Orchard Pie Sale raised monies to help cover the cost of a state leadership conference in the spring and regional leadership workshop opportunities.

Students once again volunteered their time on Veterans Day to present a program of appreciation for the residents and veterans at Brandywine Assisted Living facility. The residents were appreciative with the students' efforts; our students were grateful for the opportunity to say thank you for the service of these vets.

Plans are complete for the annual Semi Formal dance on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Litchfield Community Center. As has been done in the past, a large portion each ticket sold will be donated to the Children's Fund in Litchfield.

## Ecology Students Clean Up White Memorial

Litchfield High School Ecology students with their teacher, Dean Birdsall, helped White Memorial Foundation forester Lukas Hyder identify and remove non-native invasive plants. They worked to eradicate Asian Bittersweet and Japanese Honeysuckle from a region on the property. This effort significantly improved the esthetics of this region and will allow the native plants to flourish.

This effort is part of an annual cooperation arrangement with the WMCC. This organization allows the students to use the White Memorial facilities and the students give back with their environmental efforts. These students will continue this battle with these non-native plants on the Litchfield High School campus.

In another extension of the classroom experience, students travelled to the Livingston Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy to assist in a research effort. Mallards, Wood Ducks, and American Black Ducks were aged, sexed, and banded by the Ecology students under the direction of Ian Gereg, Director of Aviculture and Education.

## NHS Officers Elected

The following students are the officers for the Mortimer Warren Chapter of the National Honor Society at Litchfield High School. Pictured below are Shelby Butwell, Secretary; Rocky Mancini, President; Mark Luzzi, Treasurer and Joe Wihbey, Vice President.

The additional junior and senior members of the Mortimer Warren Chapter are:

- ◇ Julia Carr
- ◇ Thomas Courtney
- ◇ Gabrielle DeVito
- ◇ Matthew Gallagher
- ◇ Nicholas Guerrera
- ◇ Ashley Indrisek
- ◇ Alison Irwin
- ◇ Andrea Kleid
- ◇ Eve Mergenthaler
- ◇ Gracie McGeehin
- ◇ Philip Simonin
- ◇ Christopher Stern
- ◇ Julia Tompkins



## New Club Determined to Keep Momentum Going

Last year a new committee was formed with leaders from All-School Student Council, Interact, and Peer Educators to plan and execute our Random Acts of Kindness Week. The enthusiasm among the student body and staff encouraged this group to continue their efforts to reinforce the values of respect, tolerance, and sense of responsibility for others with the formation of a new club at Litchfield High School, the Acts of Kindness Club (referred to as A-OK!).

In addition to plans for year-long reminders of the mission of Litchfield High School, this group has taken on the ambitious goal of raising \$5000 to sponsor a child with the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Their first fundraising event was a Touch A Truck event on Sunday, October 23rd in the front parking lot of the high school. Trucks of all sizes, shapes and uses delighted children who were able to scramble over them. Food, face painting, games, tee shirts and sweatshirts that had been printed by club members were also for sale.

Alison Irwin, a member of the club, pleased with the response for this first effort, commented "This is really a challenging goal - we will be planning more events throughout the year, but we are off to a great start!"

## 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Players Present *Guys and Dolls, Jr.*

The Litchfield 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Players presented their premiere musical production, *Guys and Dolls Jr.*! The auditorium was transformed on Wednesday and Thursday November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> when over 80 students from Litchfield Middle School under the direction of Mr. Dan Porri and producer Mrs. Beth Steinberg showcased efforts they had made since early September in what was a spectacular performance. The 60 minute show performed in one act and features most of the great music and memorable scenes from the original Broadway production, *Guys and Dolls*. Classic numbers such as "Luck be a Lady", "Guys and Dolls", and "Sit Down You're Rockin' The Boat" kept audiences entertained in this fast paced and funny musical.



## Author Dan Gutman Skypes With Litchfield High School

To support a fantastic middle school independent reading program, popular young adult writer, Dan Gutman, "visited" over 35 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders at the Litchfield High School library media center via Skype conference on October 14<sup>th</sup>. This live, interactive video conference gave Dan an opportunity to share with our students how a reluctant reader can become a writer, and gave our students a chance to ask questions about Dan's life and work as an author as well as share insights and opinions about their favorite titles. Thanks, Dan - we had a great time meeting you!

For more information about Dan Gutman, visit him at [www.dangutman.com](http://www.dangutman.com)



## Project Poetry Live!

**N**ow in its 19th season, Project Poetry Live! (PPL!) has affected nearly 25,000 Connecticut students from towns ranging from Litchfield, Morris, and Plymouth to Torrington, Thomaston, Watertown, Waterbury and Winsted. The program has been running since the 1990's when it was founded by Executive & Artistic Director of Litchfield Performing Arts, Inc., Vita West Muir, with the desire to bring students together to express themselves and reduce socio-economic barriers using the common thread of art. Each year PPL! brings professional poets, artists, musicians and dancers together with 7th – 12th graders from five participating school districts at no charge to the students. This year the schools are Eli Terry Jr. Middle School (Plymouth), Litchfield High School, Swift Middle School (Watertown) Thomaston High School and West Side Middle School (Waterbury). Through the program, students develop ongoing social, behavioral and personal skills that lead to improved grades and heightened performance at school.

During Phase I of the project in September, 153 students met at the Connecticut Dance Theatre in Waterbury for a 2-day Interdistrict Workshop. Under the direction of poet Cheryl Della Pelle, each student wrote a short poem which they then transformed into art, music or dance.

During the week of October 3rd, Phase II of PPL!, New-York based Matthew Westerby Company was in-residence at each of the five schools teaching the art of movement, trust and communication through dance. At the end of the residency week, the students auditioned to become part of the student Dance Ensemble or Jazz Big Band led by Matthew Westerby Company and professional jazz musician and composer, Albert Rivera. Over the course of October and early November the students will rehearse in preparation for three performances at Naugatuck Valley Community College where they will perform alongside Matthew Westerby Company, the Naugatuck Valley Community College Dance Ensemble and Albert Rivera's Quartet. There will be two student day performances on November 17th and 18th, and a public evening performance and art show on November 18th at Naugatuck Valley Community College Arts Center 7:30 – 9:00 PM.



**R**ebecca Nordland, from Mr. Bucklin's 8<sup>th</sup> grade class, with Dr. McGoldrick, high school English teacher. For a class project, Rebecca created a 'mask', using symbols to depict a character from *Tropical Kiss*. The novel was written by Dr. McGoldrick and his wife Nikoo under their pseudonym Jan Coffey.

## A Fundraiser Thank You!

**T**he 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers would like to thank all the students and parents who helped make this year's fundraiser once again a success. Forty percent of the profits from this effort will help offset the cost of the end of year bus trip. Last year's 7<sup>th</sup> grade travelled to New York City for a boat tour on the famous Circle Line and then toured the *USS Intrepid*. This end of year trip is always one of the highlights of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade experience, and the efforts of the parents and students in October help make it possible.

# Litchfield High School, Mid-Term Exam Schedule

		Thursday, Jan 19 A Day	Friday, Jan 20 B Day	Monday, Jan 23 A Day	Tuesday, Jan 24 B Day
1	7:23-8:43	<b>Semester 1 Exam</b>	Semester 1 Class	Semester 2 Class	<b>Semester 1 Exam</b>
2	8:47-10:10	Semester 1 Class	<b>Semester 1 Exam</b>	<b>Semester 1 Exam</b>	Semester 2 Class
3	10:14-11:34	<b>Semester 1 Exam</b>	Semester 1 Class	Semester 2 Class	<b>Semester 1 Exam</b>
Lunch(11/12)	11:38-12:00				
Flex 1 (9/10)	11:38-12:10				
Flex 2 (11/12)	12:04-12:36				
Lunch (9/10)	12:14-12:36				
4	12:40-2:00	Semester 1 Class	<b>Semester 1 Exam</b>	<b>Semester 1 Exam</b>	Semester 2 Class

- ◇ **DELAYED OPENING SCHEDULE** – Exam periods will remain 80 minutes; class periods will be shortened.
- ◇ Students may not reschedule exams for reasons other than illness or permission from administration.
- ◇ Students must coordinate directly with teachers to schedule the time and place for make-up exams. Teachers are expected to proctor make-up exams.

## Advisor/Advisee Program Launched For High School Students

In September, a new Friday program was initiated for all Litchfield High School students. This program, in response to Connecticut High School Reform and a national emphasis on smaller learning communities, has as its mission, the fostering of student intellectual growth and goal-setting/decision-making/problem-solving skills through small group discussions and activities.

These activities are aimed at building our students' skill base for effective study habits, long-term planning, and self-advocacy. Students will work with adult advisors to meet Litchfield High School academic, social, and civic expectations.

Two primary goals have been established to help staff and students meet these objectives. The first goal is to personalize each student's interaction with the Litchfield High School community. The program will provide opportunities for students to develop personal and community relationships with adults and peers, strengthening interpersonal skills and increasing self-awareness and tolerance for diversity.

The second goal will implement a curriculum that teaches students how to be self-directed learners. Students will be provided academic and emotional support to students to ensure their academic success. Teachers will help facilitate student reflection on learning strengths and weaknesses, using individualized and appropriate study skills.

This program will run year long, on designated Fridays during the normal flex period.

## Important Dates

**Dec. 10,** SAT Exams

**Dec. 14 and Jan. 11,** NOON Dismissal  
Teacher Professional Development

**Dec. 23-Jan. 2,** Winter Break

## Biology Classes

### Test Foods for Nutrition

In keeping with the theme of, "You Are What You Eat!", students in Mr. Conklin's biology classes have conducted experiments to see which of the nutrient groups were present in samples of food they brought from home. Tests were performed to show the presence of reducing sugars, starch, protein or lipids. While most of their pre-lab predictions were confirmed, there were some surprises, especially the presence of lipid in seemingly fat free foods!



## Special Events

**Dec. 3,** Semi-Formal  
Litchfield Community Center, 7 PM

**Dec. 6,** Winter Band Concert  
LIS Auditorium, 7:30 PM

**Dec. 13,** Winter Chorus Concert  
LIS Auditorium, 8:00 PM

**Jan. 5,** Music Parents Meeting  
6:00 PM, LHS Chorus Room

**Jan. 13-14,** Northern Music Regional Festival  
New Britain HS