

Cougar Connection

A Publication of Helen Keller Middle School and the Easton PTA
January 2009

"One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar."
— Helen A. Keller



Principal's Pen

Dear Parents,

Aristotle wrote that good habits formed at youth make all the difference. Character is power; and character is both needed for, and developed, from teaching and our culture shapes character.

Here at Helen Keller, we have developed the "Keller Way" which involves the development of performance character (working hard, persevering, setting goals, and giving and receiving feedback) as well as moral character (students respecting and helping each other). The "Keller Way" expresses the core values of our school, helps everyone feel connected, and is the glue that binds our focus.

Each month a character trait is selected for emphasis and modeled throughout the building. At the end of the month, two students from each grade level are recognized for their repetitive demonstration of that trait. Over time, our commitment to continuous improvement, personal and collective responsibility, and strong social and emotional skills will prepare our students to flourish in the 21st Century.

Please join our staff in congratulating the following recipients:

Responsibility – September

Olympia Crist
Julia Silverstein
Lorenzo Marchetti
Elizabeth Bobroske
Ali Kudej
Al Lenoci

Respect - October

Andrew Jurgielewicz
Lizzie West
Ramsey Walsh
Taylor Smith
Isabelle Benedetto
Brian Jacobs

Honesty - November

Thomas Carter
Rachel Rosenstein
Sabrina El-Haj
Peter Gombos
Lydia Wasmer
Zachary Shapiro

Helen Keller Middle School
360 Sport Hill Road
Easton, CT 06612

<http://www.helenkellerps.org>

Phone:
203.268.8651

Fax:
203.268.6105

The Cougar Connection is a monthly publication of Helen Keller Middle School and the Easton PTA.

Previous issues of the Cougar Connection can be found on the Helen Keller Middle School website at:

<http://www.helenkellerps.org>

and the Easton PTA website at:

<http://www.eastonpta.com>

Newsletter Topics.....Location

Principal's Pen.....	page 1
Be Involved	page 2
HKMS Ski Club.....	page 2
News from the PTA Presidents.....	page 3
Food Drive.....	page 4
HKMS Geography Bee	page 4
Troop Support.....	page 4
Recycling at HKMS.....	page 4
Septa Gift Cards	page 5
ECC Annual Wine Tasting.....	page 5
HKMS Postural Screenings	page 5
PTA Presents The Harlem Globetrotters	page 6
January 2010 Calendar	page 7
HKMS Birthday Book Club Form	http://www.eastonpta.com/pdf/hkms_birthday_book_club.pdf

Continued from page 1

Citizenship - December

Nick Bradshaw
Shelby Vertula
Cristina DiPalma
Tommy Milazzo
Maria DeVoto
Aaron Simkovitz

Schools with deep, sustained character initiatives have observed that students thrive when they are immersed in an environment defined by shared values. This kind of environment challenges us to become the best persons we can be. As always, thank you for your support.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan C. Parker,
jparker@eastonps.org
Helen Keller Middle School Principal

BE INVOLVED in January

Attend a PTA Meeting
(Friday, January 15th at 9:30 am –
Easton Public Library, Community Room)

Help OVERSEE the School Store
for an hour or two.
(contact Liz Dehler at ebufano@optonline.net
or Heidi Adair at hadair@optonline.net)

ENJOY the HKMS Choral Concert on January 27th
and the Band Concert on February 3rd.

Helen Keller Ski Club

Our first Ski Club trip of the year took place on Friday, January 8th at Ski Sundown in New Hartford, CT. With 123 members, Ski Club is definitely popular in the Keller Community. The popularity is not what made this past trip special but the very behaviors and actions of the students within the club. We observed students in all the grades who really listened and not only followed the rules but followed them in an exemplary manner. Kudos to all the students in Ski Club! We're looking forward to our next three trips.

Lisa Burghardt and Bill Gardella, Co-Chairs

Many thanks to the January 8th Parent Chaperones and helpers, without you this club could not exist:

Paul La Gaipa
Hilde Azarian
Denise Bigelow
Julie Dawid
Robert Fey
Tim Gutman
Laura Jones
Mitchell Kaufman
Michael Keden

Gerry King
Rose Knott
Shelagh Kuhsel
Paul La Gaipa
Kyle MacGillroy
Steve Miller
Mark Mirowski
Shikha Sharma
David Wolfsohn



News from the PTA Presidents



SAVE THOSE BOX TOPS AND LABELS and SIGN UP AT LOCAL STORES!!!



We are now offering the opportunity for you to help raise money for HKMS simply by cutting out and sending in those "Box Tops for Education," "Campbell's Labels for Education" and "Tyson Project A+." We'll have a collection box in the front office at Keller now, so send the Box Tops and Labels in with your student or drop them into the box next time you're in the school. Our school can also get money back from your shopping trips to Target, Stop&Shop, Big Y and Subway. See the notes below for more information, or ask at these participating stores. Otherwise, you can contact Karen Marchetti, at gmgm1@hotmail.com Karen Marchetti has been running these programs for HKMS and SSES for years and we are grateful for her time and efforts.

Another special THANKS to Lisa Burghardt for all her efforts to make the first of four **SKI CLUB TRIPS** such a success. The students who attended had a great time at Sundown Mountain and everyone stayed safe. Please remember to let her know if your child is not attending any of the future three trips, as she can fill that spot with some students on a wait list for this great activity.

Need birthday gifts for your child or child's friends?... **BUY A GIFT CERTIFICATE OR SPIRIT WEAR ITEM from the SCHOOL STORE.** The School Store is open on Fridays, 11:00-1:00, operated by Keller students. Come in or send you child to the store to get needed supplies or clothes.

If you have an hour or two, even just one time, please sign up to help at the **School Store** on Fridays. It's a fun way to see a little of what's going on in your child's day at school. To help, please contact Heidi Adair hadair@optonline.net and Laura T. Jones stoneybell@sbcglobal.net

Keep an eye out for the upcoming opportunity to leave a legacy at HKMS and support our schools through the **COMMEMORATIVE BRICK SALE** program. Information and forms will be sent out to parents soon.

CHORAL CONCERT CDs will be on sale at the January 27 concert. Look for more information and the opportunity to order your copy during the concert.

STOP & SHOP A+ Bonus Bucks

Every time you shop with your Stop & Shop card, you will earn A+ Bonus Bucks points for HKMS. Be sure to register your Stop & Shop card at www.stopandshop.com/aplus. Designate HKMS as the school you would like to help. These points add up to valuable cash rewards for HKMS to use.

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

We have more products than ever before. New products this year are: Avery, Juicy Juice, Kleenex, Huggies, Kotex, Hefty Kitchen bags and much more. Check the list at www.boxtops4education.com.

Please remember to include your child's Homeroom Teacher's name on the envelope/baggie when you send your Box Tops in. Do not include any expired labels and do not cut the date; otherwise they will be invalid.

CAMPBELL'S LABELS FOR EDUCATION

Have you heard the news? You can now earn 5 points when you save proof of purchase from over 150 products; (ie. V8 Splash, Campbell's Supper Bake and select Campbell's soup). Check the website www.labelsforeducation.com for the entire list. Remember please send in only the UPCs from the soup cans, Pepperidge Farm breads, bagels, Goldfish crackers--the only exception are the V8 Splash Juice and Smoothies which only the LID is valid.

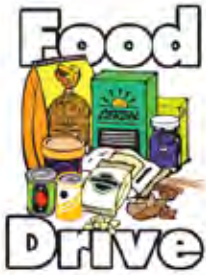
TYSON PROJECT A+ LABEL COLLECTION PROGRAM

Tyson Labels also now appear in their bacon products. Please remember to send in the entire box bottom. In the case of the family size plastic bags please send in the entire end piece with the logo intact. You can visit their website at www.tyson.com/projectaplus.

BIG Y SUPERMARKET EDUCATION EXPRESS

If you shop at Big Y please make sure to choose HKMS as your designated school. Note that sometimes there are Double Points offered. This means, every time you shop and purchase items marked with Education Express school bus logo you get double the points. You can register at www.bigy.com.

*Heidi Adair (hadair@optonline.net)
and Laura T. Jones (stoneybell@sbcglobal.net)
Easton PTA HKMS Co-Presidents*



The HKMS Student Council recently ran a food drive to assist the Bridgeport Rescue Mission in filling their food pantry. The Bridgeport Rescue Mission is an organization that helps attack hunger by supplying pantry boxes that have the bare essentials to feed families. Students eagerly helped collect, box and load over 1,100 food items such as rice, canned soup and vegetables, cereal, pasta, sauce, drinks, and much more! Special congratulations go to Mrs. Dunkerton's homeroom that collected the most food items with 219! Needless to say, the Bridgeport Rescue Mission was very grateful and appreciative of all the students' hard work. Thank you to all who made this such a wonderful success!

Helen Keller School Wide Geography Bee



During the month of November HKMS students at each grade level participated in the preliminary rounds of The National Geography Bee, sponsored by National Geographic and Google. **Winners from the preliminary rounds including 6th graders:** James Ordway, Andre Giglio, Jared Rosamilia, **7th graders:** Matt Gardella, Martin Ohradan, Ryan Wendt, and **8th graders:** John Colasante, Kiley Michaels, Jay Oakley and Julia Wargo competed in a final competition held on Wednesday Dec. 23rd, in the school cafeteria.

Julia Wargo was the top finalist while Kiley Michaels finished 2nd and Martin Ohradan took 3rd place. Julia will now take a qualifying test to determine eligibility for the State Level Bee being held at Central CT State University on April 7th. Prior to the final competition several students and staff participated in a few warm-up activities which kicked off the event. Participants included students: Max Sanderson, Jack Pantalena, Colin O'Brien, Scott Colby, Tess Effinger and teachers: Mr. Cockerham, Ms. Solis, Mr. Marusa, Mrs. Broas and Mr. Sather. The event was very exciting and fun for all!

HKMS Social Studies Team



Congratulations to Andrew Jurgielewicz, a 6th grader, for taking the initiative to support the Troop Project run by Mrs. Weinshel and her husband, Michael, and her sister, Susan. Andrew has taken it upon himself to contact numerous companies requesting supplies and snacks for the soldiers deployed to Afghanistan. Boxes have begun to arrive at school and Mrs. Weinshel and her family will package them and ship them to the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade. After visiting the Weinshel house, Andrew learned that postage is expensive and he began to solicit funds on his own. This is a young man who is helping to make a difference and we are very proud of him. The soldiers are very appreciative of the treats and necessities and especially grateful for the warm wishes that come with the boxes.

Carol S. Weinshel

cweinshel@eastonps.org

Director, Learning Resources and Technology

Recycling Has Expanded at HKMS!



Paper and Bottle Collection:

The staff at HKMS, in conjunction with the HKMS Environmental Awareness Club, are now recycling all classroom paper products, in addition to all plastic water bottles and other beverage containers from classrooms.

Used or Broken Cell Phones:

There is a collection bin in the HKMS main office for all used or broken cell phones. HKMS is collecting these phones for the recycling company, Terracycle. In exchange for sending in these phones, for which the materials will be reused, HKMS will earn money to purchase additional recycling bins.

Capri Drink Pouches and Chips Bags:

Collection of empty Capri drink pouches and Lays/Fritos chips bags is taking place in the cafeteria. Gang Green will turn these items into Terracycle. Cool items such as backpacks, pencil cases, and folders will be made from these recycled products! A profit will be earned for our school, and we are helping to keep such items out of our landfills!

Think Gift Cards

'First'

Next Order is
Feb. 1st



Easton Special Ed PTA
(SEPTA) will continue

to sell hundreds of types of different gift cards in different denominations at face value all year round. Keep some on hand for those last-minute birthday gifts! We will place an order on the "First" of each month – starting Feb. 1st -- and you will have your cards hand delivered to you within a week. Go to <https://www.shopwithscrip.com/>. Choose from the hundreds of available gift cards and see how they benefit special education. You need to create a log-in using your email address and SEPTA's account number (E2L4B2AB22968). Then send in a check for the total amount to Easton SEPTA c/o the SSES office. For more information or a paper order form, please email Easton-SEPTA@hotmail.com or call Mary at 203.372.2103.

Postural Screenings at HKMS

Scoliosis/Postural screening will be conducted at Helen Keller Middle School. Your child will be screened the weeks of 3/1/2010 through 3/12/2010 during gym class.

The purpose of postural screenings is to detect signs of spinal curvature at their earliest stages so that the need for treatment can be determined.

Scoliosis, the most common spinal abnormality, is a side-to-side curve of the spine. It is usually detected in childhood or early adolescence. Most cases of spinal curvatures are mild and require only ongoing observation by a physician after the diagnosis has been made. Mild curvatures are often noticeable only to those trained in detecting spinal abnormalities. Others may become progressively more severe as the child continues to grow. Early treatment can prevent the development of a severe deformity which can later affect the health and appearance of the child.

The procedure for screening is simple. I will look at your child's back while he/she stands and bends forward. For this screening, boys and girls will be seen separately and individually.

Boys must remove their shirts. Girls may want to wear a halter top or bathing suit top or bra. It is necessary for the entire back to be visible during the screening process. Shoes and sneakers must be removed.

You will be notified only if medical follow-up is necessary. This screening does not replace your child's need for regular health care and check-ups. If you do not want your child to have a postural screening at school, please notify me at 268-8651, ext. 6 by Friday February 26, 2010.

Regards,

Mary Jane Bellenot, RN, BSN



ECC Annual Wine Tasting

Sample wines from around the world
and enjoy catered hors d'oeuvres & dessert

Sat., Jan. 23rd
7-10:30 pm
\$50 per person



Easton PTA presents Winter Family Fun Night at Arena at Harbor Yard

Featuring

The Harlem Globetrotters

Saturday, February 27th

2:00pm and 7:00pm

\$22.50 per ticket

(special PTA price saves \$8.75 off retail price)

For more information contact Gayle Worthington 203.372.7272 or gjworthington@optonline.net

The Harlem Globetrotters - Arena at Harbor Yard

Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

No. of tickets: _____ x \$22.50 = Total \$ _____ Circle Time: 2:00pm 7:00pm

PLUS: Scouts earn a badge for \$0.50 each. No. of badges: _____ x \$0.50 = Total \$ _____

Send completed form & check payable to Easton PTA to main office attn: Globetrotters by Feb 5.

January 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 New Year's Day	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Staff Day - Early Dismissal - 12:10	13	14	15	16
17	18 No School Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday	19	20	21	22	23 ECC Annual Wine Tasting 7-10:30 pm
24	25 No School Inservice P.D. Day	26 *End of 2nd quarter marking period	27 Chorus Concert 7 P.M. *End of 2nd quarter marking period	28	29 *Report Cards will be issued on February 2nd	30
31						

*The change in dates is due to the snow day on Wednesday, December 9th, 2009