

HKMS Cougar Connection

November 2011



CALENDAR @ A GLANCE

Tues., Nov. 15	Easton Board of Ed Mtg; 7:30 pm; HKMS Media Center
Fri., Nov. 18	Photo Retakes
Fri., Nov. 18	Yearbook Orders Due
Sun., Nov. 21	Deadline for Ski Club registration
Wed., Nov. 23	EARLY DISMISSAL; 12:40 pm
Thurs., Nov. 24 & Fri., Nov. 25	NO SCHOOL; Happy Thanksgiving!
Mon., Nov. 28 – Sat., Dec. 3	PTA Fall Book Fair; Media Center
Sat., Dec. 3	Annual 8 th Grade Pancake Breakfast; 8 – 11 am; Cafetorium
Mon., Dec. 5	PTA Panel on Teens/Tweens in Cyberspace; 7:30 pm; HKMS Media Center
Sat., Dec. 10	ELF Holiday Party & Silent Auction; Aspetuck Valley Country Club
Tues., Dec. 13	Easton Board of Ed Mtg; 7:30 pm; HKMS Media Ctr.
Fri., Dec. 16	Student Council Holiday Dance



ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL'S PEN by Kathy Burke

It is said that the truest measure of character is in our deeds and actions. Supporting the development of character attributes helps build a positive school climate and thus strengthens the HKMS community. Throughout the year we will be recognizing students who demonstrate positive character attributes in their daily interactions with fellow students and staff. Each month a trait is selected as an area of focus. Two students from each grade level will be recognized for consistently demonstrating the positive character trait of the month. It was a pleasure to have breakfast with the students who were recognized for the month of September. Thank you and congratulations to **Kinsey Colby, Finn Navin, Jenna, Thoretz, Zach Connor, Andrew Jurgielewicz & Gallant Silverglade** for being wonderful role models demonstrating "Responsibility" for the month of September.

The traits we will focus on for the rest of the year are as follows:

- October: Respect
- November: Honesty
- December: Citizenship/Service to Others
- January: Kindness
- February: Perseverance
- March: Leadership
- April: Integrity
- May: Patience and Caring
- June: Reliability

Mrs. Kaplan and I look forward to our monthly Bagel Breakfasts with the students.

Veterans Day is a time to honor those who have served and sacrificed for our country. In a speech honoring our veterans, John F. Kennedy said, "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."



School Calendar

The current (tentative!) last day of school for this academic year will be Thurs., June 21, 2012. Complete information on how any future emergency school closings will impact the school calendar is here:

<http://www.er9.org/Calendars/Revised2011-2012SchoolYearCalendar.PDF>

Yearbook orders are due this Fri., Nov. 18th. Need an order form?

<http://helenkellerps.org/Yearbook/2012%20HKMS%20Yearbok%20Form.pdf>

Media Madness Update by Marion Carlson, HKMS Media Center

As a result of the gracious donations to the Media Madness program, the Media Center has been able to purchase the Teen Nominee Nutmegs 2013 books. This is very exciting, as our students are thoroughly enjoying the current 2012 Nutmegs and will have these to look forward to when they are officially announced in February. The 2013 Nutmeg titles will be introduced to the Media Center at HKMS in early February, shortly after we have voted for our favorite Nutmeg for 2012, in late January.



We have also have been able to embellish our collection with the additions of several popular books such as *Son of Neptune*, *39 Clues Series*, *Missing on Superstition Mountain* and *Kingdom Keepers*. The purchase of these books is very much appreciated by staff and students alike. We have some voracious readers at HKMS and this is a wonderful program that enables us to continue purchasing the books they love to read! Thank you to everyone.

Interested in donating to Media Madness? A form is in this issue.

Student Directory Update

Wouldn't an extra copy be handy in the car? Additional copies of the new student directory are available for purchase at \$10 for current PTA members and \$12 for non-members. Please send a check payable to the "Easton PTA" to the school office, attn: "Student Directory".

Odyssey of the Mind Update

Odyssey of the Mind teams are forming! Get a team together of 7 students (maximum) and a few parents to coach! Coach training is on 12/4/11 for all those parent coaches interested and Student Day is 11/19/11, both at Bristol Eastern High School. The PTA has also voted to register HKMS in the Gr. 6-8 division. There are long-term problems to begin working on for the state tournament on 3/31/12. Check out www.ctom.org and please contact Stephanie Frangenes Loo at sfrangenes@yahoo.com with any questions.

"What Your Kids are Doing in Cyberspace...and Why You Need to Know" Presentation

Join experts Rich Colangelo and Gabriel Rossi on Monday, Dec. 5th at 7:30 pm in the HKMS Media Center as they bring you up to speed on what kids are doing on their computers and mobile devices. They'll also discuss strategies you can use to help your tween or teen steer clear of cyber-bullying -- especially given Connecticut's new anti-bullying laws -- and protect their digital reputation -- which will someday be examined by college recruiters and potential employers.

Have You Paid Your Dues?

Thanks to everyone who has sent in class dues so far! As we recently communicated by e-mail, we're asking each student to make a one-time class dues contribution that will help pay for CMT snacks and Teacher Appreciation during his or her entire time at Keller. We haven't yet reached our goal to fund these activities for current students, so if you haven't already done so, we ask that you please send in a check made out to Easton PTA or cash. The one-time class dues per student are:

6th Grade: \$15

7th Grade: \$10

8th Grade: \$5

Thank you for your support!



Volunteers Needed for HKMS Blue Ribbon Celebration

On November 23 (the Wednesday before Thanksgiving) HKMS students and faculty will be celebrating our designation as a 2011 National Blue Ribbon School – and we need your help! Parent volunteers are needed to help serve frozen yogurt to students during a special extended snack period. If you'd like to help, please contact Dona Zappulla at 6zappullas@gmail.com.

Thanks for Giving HKMS Some TLC!

The PTA extends a special thank you to the parent volunteers who helped us with our recent effort to beautify the HKMS grounds, and to Snow's Farm for giving us mulch at cost. If you haven't seen the main entrance of the school lately, you'll be amazed at the transformation! Thanks especially to Amy Fulton and Cheryl Frier who did a tremendous job leading the effort, donating their time, skills and personal resources. Be on the look-out for phase two in the Spring!

Sign Up for Ski Club by November 21

Just a reminder that if your student would like to join the HKMS Ski Club, you need to return your forms and payment to the HKMS office by November 21st. If you need forms, you can download them from the PTA Web site: <http://www.eastonpta.com/>. Questions to HKMS.Ski.Club@gmail.com

JBHS to Stage "The Wiz" this Week

Barlow Theater Productions will present "The Wiz," a 70's funk rendition of the classic "Wizard of Oz" on November 17, 18 and 19 at the Joel Barlow High School Auditorium. There is a Saturday matinee which is great for younger theatre goers! Details and ticket info at: <http://www.joelbarlowps.org/StudentActivities/Student.html>

Barlow PTSA and Redding Library Present Documentary Screening with Film's Director

"BUCK, was created to move people to make changes in how they deal with horses and life's challenges. Buck Brannaman is a true cowboy who has overcome tremendous personal odds. This film intends to inspire, motivate and teach through principles of respect, partnership and trust rather than anger, fear and intimidation."

The JBHS PTSA and The Mark Twain Library are co-sponsoring a screening of the Award-Winning documentary BUCK on Tuesday, November 29 at 7 pm at JBHS. BUCK was directed and produced by Cindy Meehl, a Redding resident and mother of two Barlow Grads. Cindy will attend and stay for a Q & A following the screening. Tickets are available at: <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=etk86ncab&oeidk=a07e55ir24d5745bbcd>

It's PTA Reflections Time Again!

"Put on your dancing shoes, grab a camera, or pick up a pen or paintbrush, and create! It'll be fun! The PTA's REFLECTIONS PROGRAM has begun!" What a difference the arts make. For math skills, social skills, creative thinking, self esteem, etc. Encourage your child's artistic exploration. Each year, the National PTA Reflections Arts Achievement Program challenges students to create art that relates to a specific theme. This year's theme is "DIVERSITY MEANS ..." Participation can be in six arts areas; Visual Arts, Literature, Photography, Dance Choreography, Musical Composition and Film Production. You may enter a piece of work in more than one category, and you may have more than one entry in the same category. Entries are critiqued against children in the same grade division. Learn more by visiting PTAreflections.org.

The Easton PTA will be hosting the Reflections Program for all students, from pre-school to eighth grade (high school entries are submitted to Joel Barlow High School PTSA). To participate, entries will be received in the main office at SSES and HKMS until January 4, 2012 at 3:30 p.m.. For a copy of the entry form, and to find out the program rules, please visit our website at www.eastonpta.com. Please read the rules carefully. All forms must be submitted to be considered for the next level of competition. Copies of the entry form and the program rules will also be available in the main office at SSES and HKMS. If you have

any questions, please contact your Reflections Chair, Claire-Anne Meskers, at meskers@optonline.net or 203-374-5566.

Boys Basketball Holiday Tournament

JBHS will host their annual Holiday Tournament on Tues., Dec. 27th and Thurs., Dec. 29th. Admission is free, and there will be half-time events for elementary and middle-school kids during the varsity games. More at: <http://www.barlowboysbasketball.com/>

Around Town:

ELF Cocktail Party and Silent Auction: Saturday, Dec. 10th at Aspetuck Valley Country Club. For more information, visit: www.eastonlearningfoundation.org



ECC Events (*not HKMS affiliated*). Call 203.459.9700 to register for the following:

- XBOX 360 Madden Tournament: Sat., Nov. 19th, 1-4 pm; \$10 admission at door.
- UConn's Craig Austrie Basketball Shooting Clinic; Sat., Nov. 26th; 2-5 pm; \$90 members, \$100N non-Members

Cougar Connection Info

The Cougar Connection is a joint publication of the Easton PTA and Helen Keller Middle School. It is produced the 15th of every month, September through June, and distributed by HKMS' email Listserv. To add or change your email information go to www.er9.org/sses/ and click on "Join Our Listserv".

Please submit any information – in MS Word format -- by the 12th of each month. Questions and submissions to Cathy Dunsby at cdunsby@yahoo.com

Important Websites

www.helenkellerps.org

www.eastonpta.com

www.er9.org



Helen Keller Middle School

360 Sport Hill Rd.
Easton, CT 06612

phone: 203.261.8651

Please join the HKMS PTA for an educational evening

What Your Kids are Doing in Cyberspace

And Why You Need to Know

A panel discussion featuring

**Richard Colangelo
& Gabriel Rossi**

It's hard to keep up with today's tech-savvy kids. What can you do as a parent to help them make smart choices in the digital world?

Our expert panel will help you get up to speed on what kids are doing on computers and mobile devices, and discuss strategies you can use to help your pre-teen or teenager:

- **Steer clear of cyber-bullying**, especially given Connecticut's new anti-bullying laws
- **Protect their digital reputation**, which will someday be examined by college recruiters and potential employers



About the Experts...

Richard Colangelo is a Senior Assistant State's Attorney who has specialized in cases of child exploitation, including cases involving the Internet. He is Chairman of the State Board of Examiners for Psychologists, a Police Commissioner for the town of Easton and Vice President of the Human Services Counsel Board of Directors in Norwalk. He has taught in the Criminal Justice program at Norwalk Community College since 1995.

Gabriel Rossi is an instructional designer and media consultant for schools, museums, hospitals and universities. He's spent the last dozen years collaborating with students, teachers and scholars to better understand the motivations and culture driving media usage and to build innovative media for teaching and learning. He is presently Senior Associate Director for Curriculum at Yale University.

Where: HKMS Media Center

When: Monday, December 5, 2011

Time: 7:30 pm



HKMS..... "MEDIA MADNESS "

The HKMS Media Center would greatly appreciate your support!

With your donation we can continue to build and update our media center with new book releases and student favorites.

A **\$20** donation will be used to purchase books for the students to enjoy reading as well as academic books for enrichment. Books purchased will be marked on the inside cover with a bookplate(s) dedicated to your child or family. Donations can be made at any time during the school year.

Student reading suggestions are always welcome and encouraged!!

Questions? Please e-mail Kim Lenoci at: mrskiml@yahoo.com.

***** tear off *****



Enclosed is our \$20 donation to the Media Madness book drive.

Checks may be made payable to : "Easton PTA - Media Madness" and brought/sent to the Main Office. Please note "Media Madness" on your envelope.

Child's/Family name for dedication

Skip the Mall and Shop at Home with Easton SEPTA's

Gift Card Central

Make your gift shopping easier, while saving time and energy and supporting Easton special education! Gift cards are the perfect gift solution for everyone and there are hundreds of retailer gift cards available in multiple denominations:

1. Go to <https://www.shopwithscrip.com>. All you need to provide is your email address and SEPTA's account number, which is E2L4B2AB22968. Make your choices and add them to your shopping cart.
2. Either make a payment using PrestoPay, or write a check made out to "Easton SEPTA" and send it to Easton SEPTA c/o the SSES office. We will get your gift cards to you!

HOLIDAY ORDERING DATES

	ORDER DEADLINE	ESTIMATED ARRIVAL
Black Friday Ordering	11/18/11	11/22/11
Holiday Order #1	12/1/11	12/5/11
Holiday Order #2	12/8/11	12/12/11
Hannukah & Last Ditch Order	12/15/11	12/19/11
Procrastinators' Order	12/19/11	12/22/11

Have a last minute gift to give? Need something and fast?

We have a Gift Card Central Store with gift cards in stock for:



Contact Mary Burke by calling (203-372-2103) or by email meburke7@hotmail.com if you are interested making a purchase.

PTA[®] Reflections unleashes your artistic talents

Dance Choreography

Photography

Film Production

Musical Composition

Literature

Visual Arts

2011-2012 Theme: **“Diversity Means...”**

Reflect on the theme. Create an original work. Be recognized.

Deadline for entries:

For details, contact

National Media Sponsor of PTA Reflections Program

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PTA REFLECTIONSSM

