



Laurel Highlighter



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To the Laurel Highlands Community:

As the 2015-16 school year is well upon us, we tread a path of challenge in regards to the state budget impasse. We are committed to providing a “best in class” education for all of our students. To date, we have maintained all of our educational programs and school based activities. In addition, through tireless work, we have obtained grants to supplement the educational cost for various district endeavors in an amount well over \$310,000. Our commitment to the student body and district stakeholders will not falter due to the barriers presented by the state budget impasse.

For the second year in a row, the Middle School has earned the honor of being considered a “Distinguished School” for educational growth. Our congratulations to the students, faculty, and administration for a job well done; your hard work and dedication is recognized by all. Our high school seniors are continuing to be accepted to their 1st or 2nd choice of college and our seniors who are entering the world of work are maintaining and growing within their positions. We are preparing our student body for their roles once the public education road ends. Congratulations! In a like manner, our elementary students are establishing a firm base to gain and add knowledge necessary for future success. Local and state assessments are continuing to show promise.

In closing, we are a district that values the “LH” brand, we will continue to expand and grow our excellence as we move forward. I hope everyone has prosperous school year.

Respectfully,

Jesse T. Wallace, III
Superintendent



Laurel Highlands Board of Education

Debra Bortz

Jamie D’Andrea-Miller

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Alicia Santore

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Student Representatives
Joshua Miller and Taylor Kodric

Assistant Secretary to the Board
Kim Pegg

Mission Statement

The mission of the Laurel Highlands School District, in partnership with students, families, and the community, is to provide a rigorous, meaningful, and relevant education which prepares students to become productive members of an ever-changing global society.

The Highliter Staff

This newsletter is a production of the Desktop Publishing/Newspaper class and is under the sponsorship of Mrs. Joanne Savini. The following students are members of the class:

- Gigi Beatty
- Mary DeFazio
- Ashley Klink
- Max Mears
- Alex Mears
- Natalie Novak
- Tim Rice
- P. J. Savini

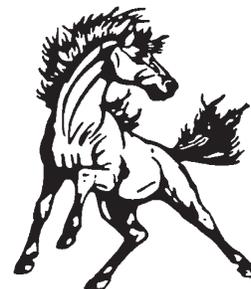
EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The Laurel Highlands School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected classification in its educational programs, activities or employment practices, as required by Title VI, Title IX, Sections 503 and 504, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, contact Mr. Jesse Wallace, Title IX and Sections 503 and 504 Coordinator at Laurel Highlands School District, 304 Bailey Avenue, Uniontown, PA 15401, 724-437-2821, or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

Equal access to the full range of programs available to individuals who are non-handicapped or non-disadvantaged will be provided to individuals who are handicapped or disadvantaged. Eligibility and admissions criteria to school programs are nondiscriminatory.

LAUREL HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



LH High School Students Observe Open Heart Surgery

Fourteen students and three teachers observed Descending Aorta Aneurysm Surgery on Tuesday, October 20, 2015.

Patricia Wolf, Educator Coordinator at Allegheny General Hospital, guided the group to an observation area that was above a real operating room. Students were seated on benches that overlooked a glass enclosed surgical room.

The head cardiologist had a camera mounted on his head so that students could watch the surgery firsthand. Two nurses answered questions and talked about the procedure. Ms. Wolf asked students questions about career choices and gave job descriptions of all the people that were in the operating room. Two cardiologists,

one physician's assistance, a surgical nurse, a surgical technician, a perfusionist, a nurse anesthetist, an anesthesiologist and many more staff assisted the patient.

Students observed a very rare surgery as the patient had a 6 cm enlarged aorta artery. This was not the typical thoracic open heart surgery.

The students asked many questions and discussed future career choices after graduating from high school. They also discussed health and healthy choices, exercise and wellness. The staff and students benefitted from an amazing real-world observation in the real operating room.



Back Row: Daniel Zuchelkowski, Jamison Siebart, Sean Michotte, Jayson Prech. Middle Row: Mrs. Schaefer, student teacher, Alex Timperio, Rowan Jalso, Haley Sutton, Cameron Cole, Teresa Fisher, Mrs. Kruper, high school biology teacher. Front Row: Sarah Kurr, Bryah Thomas, Gabrielle Beatty, Gwyneth Komula.



LH Teacher Recognized

The Air Force Association (AFA) strives to recognize those individuals who educate America's youth. Mr. Paul Livingston was nominated by the J. Walker-Mon Valley Chapter.

The AFA chapters nationwide work hard to insure our youth receive education in math and science as well as those who teach and support education are recognized. The purpose of the Teacher of the Year program is to recognize classroom teachers at the national level for their accomplishments and achievements in exciting K-12 students about science and math (STEM) and preparing them to use and contribute to tomorrow's technologies.

This is a unique opportunity for AFA to reward special teachers who are furthering excellence and making coming to class an adventure. Mr. Livingston received a certificate from the State President, a \$500 check, a commemorative pin, and a Windbreaker Jacket. He will also have the privilege to compete for National Teacher of the Year 2016. Congratulations, Mr. Livingston!



Students Provide Feedback Through ‘Student Voice’

District personnel, in partnership with the PA Consortium of Public Education, developed a district goal “to enhance student voice opportunities at LH in grades K-12.” Various students were randomly selected to meet with counselors, teachers, and administrators to discuss ways we could work together to make LH an even better place for learning. Approximately ten students meet during one class period to discuss various topics.

The district plans to meet at least four times a year and is working to select different students for each group. The topics focus on questions that have ranged from school pride to successful practices. The student input has been invaluable and allowed the district to work towards initiatives that improve school pride and the success of our students.

Ex-POW Speaks to Classes

Ex-Prisoner of War, Mr. Benjamin Portaro, traveled to Laurel Highlands High School in order to speak with Laurel Highland's students in Mr. Mike Smith's classes as well as Col. Jones JROTC classes in November.

Mr. Portaro shared his many experiences with the students providing a thorough and informative explanation of the events during World War II, in which students had been learning in class.

Ben was taken prisoner of war with ten other men and survived horrible conditions until he and a friend, Bob Knoph, escaped. Mr. Portaro had survived the unimaginable!

Ben was discharged from the Army October 13, 1945. He received many medals for his brave service to our country including the Bronze Star.

Many years later Bob surprised Ben with a phone call. He had found Ben's number in the Ex-POW Bulletin. They were reunited in Virginia with a very emotional reunion.

His service to our country is greatly appreciated as well as the opportunity to share his knowledge with our students.



Pictured: Benjamin Portaro and Mike Smith, HS social studies teacher



Mrs. Chrise to Participate in National Conference

Mrs. Karen Chrise, fourth grade teacher at Hatfield Elementary, was nominated and selected to participate the national conference ECET2, which stands for Elevating and Celebrating Effective Teaching and Teachers.

The goal of ECET2 is to celebrate effective teachers and to build a strong network of teacher leaders working together to elevate the practice and profession. The conference will feature

workshops focused on teacher leadership development and teaching practice. She will travel to San Diego, California, in January.

Mrs. Chrise is only the second teacher ever selected from Laurel Highlands. Mr. Justin Ward, fifth grade teacher at Clark Elementary, was nominated and selected last year.

Congratulations to Mrs. Karen Chrise for such an amazing honor!

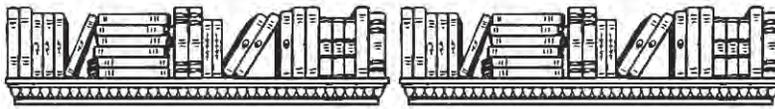
Congratulations Laurel Highlands Middle School Administration, Staff, Students, and Parents!

For the second year in a row, the middle school met the eligibility criteria to be considered and recognized as a **National Title I Distinguished School** for the state of Pennsylvania!

Each year, the Division of Federal Programs honors the top performing Title I schools in Pennsylvania designated as either Reward High Achievement or Reward High Progress. The middle school was recognized for Reward High Progress. *Reward High Progress schools are the highest 5% Title I schools* based on aggregate

progress in closing the achievement gap in Reading and Mathematics for PSSA and/or Algebra I Keystone Exams combined for the All Student group and the Historically Underperforming Student group.

The middle school is one of 16 schools in the state to be recognized for the High Progress Reward for 2014-2015. We are very proud of the middle school's accomplishments as well as our students' demonstration of the mastered skills.



Do You Have Old Books Taking Up Space in Your Home?

Consider donating children's books to one of the Laurel Highlands elementary schools for their book exchange program. National Honor Society high school students organized an event and collected more than 175 children's books. In addition, the district has secured numerous grants

to provide more books in each of our classrooms. If you are interested in donating books, please contact the building principals. Thank you for your support to assist in promoting the love of reading for all students.

Age Waiver Public Notice

Due to the decrease of enrollment and small classes in the Laurel Highlands School District special education maybe out of compliance due to age range according to PDE.

A student with a disability eligible to receive special education services may not be placed in a class in which the chronological age from the youngest to oldest student varies beyond three years in the grades K-6 and 4 years in grades 7-12 unless an exception is determined to be appropriate by the IEP team of the stu-

dent whose age is outside the age range of the program where the student would be receiving special education services. (22Pa. School Code 14.42(f))

A statement will be written into student's IEP's indicating age differences. Parents will also sign a waiver informing them of the age range of their child's special education program and their child's IEP will not be adversely affected by this change. Their child's needs will be met through the students IEP.

Laurel Highlands School District
Annual Public Notice of Child Find Activities

The Laurel Highlands School District uses the following procedures for screening, identifying, and evaluating specified needs of school-aged students requiring special programs of service.

The district meets the health screening requirements as described in Section 1402 of the School Code. The district routinely conducts screenings of a child's hearing acuity in following grades: Kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, 7, and 11, and other grades according to need. Visual acuity is screened in every grade. Height and weight data are collected yearly at every grade level and Body Mass (BMI) is calculated. Visual acuity, hearing acuity, height and weight screenings are conducted throughout the school year at the child's home school. School nurses work with the private schools (such as Montessori, New Directions, etc.) to provide required screenings. Dental exams are conducted in the spring of each school year in Kindergarten, grades 3 and 7 at the respective schools. Physical exams are conducted in the spring of each year. Physicals are conducted in Kindergarten, grades 6 and 11, as well as scoliosis screenings in grades 6 and 7.

Kindergarten registration is held in the spring of each year. Currently all school districts throughout Fayette County are holding kindergarten registration during the same week in order to take advantage of local media to inform parents of the need to register students who will attend kindergarten in the fall. Students are to accompany parents when registering for kindergarten. During the registration, kindergarten teachers will screen each student's readiness skills, speech/language therapists will screen the student's articulation and language abilities, and the nurse will review the student's health record including immunizations. Classroom teachers assess gross motor and fine motor skills, academic skills, and social-emotional skills on an on-going basis and referrals made for follow-up when needed.

Throughout the school year, the district will administer standardized tests to students, beginning in kindergarten. These tests may include the Group-Mathematics Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GMADE) and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) administered in K, 1, and 2. 4-Sight tests will be administered throughout the year in grades 3-8. Results of these tests are provided to the parent/guardian each year. In addition, elementary teachers will test students to see if they have learned the particular skill being taught. These tests are given throughout the year.

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is administered at the mandate grade levels each school year. Other testing occurs on the basis of individual need. Vocational interest tests may be given in the secondary schools. Report cards are issued quarterly. Any parent who has a question about the testing program should contact the Building Principal. The Pennsylvania Alternate School Assessment (PASA) is available for students who meet the eligibility for this assessment.

If the student is experiencing academic, social, and/or behavioral issues that are impacting the student's education, then the student may be eligible for intervention to address the student's concerns. Every attempt will be made to maintain the student in his/her regular education envi-

(Annual Public Notice of Child Find Activities, cont'd.)

ronment prior to considering special education services. Screening information is utilized by a team consisting of the building principal, classroom teacher, guidance counselor, and school psychologist to determine if adjustments can be made in the child's current program and/or if a multidisciplinary evaluation is warranted. Once the student's needs are identified the team will discuss strategies to implement in the child's current program. If a student does not make progress, parents will be asked to give written permission for a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Parents with concerns regarding their child may contact the building principal at any time to request a screening or evaluation. The request shall be in writing, if the request is made orally, the parent will be asked to make the request in writing and will be provided with the proper form. Communication with the parents and students shall be in English or their native language. For parents with a hearing impairment, the school district will provide a person to communicate in sign language.

After the multidisciplinary evaluation is completed, an Evaluation Report (ER) is compiled with parent input and includes recommendations for the types of intervention necessary to accommodate the child's specific needs. Parents are provided with a draft copy of the ER to review prior to the meeting where the results of the evaluation are explained and discussed. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed for those students qualifying for special education services. This plan includes demographic information regarding the student; his/her strengths and needs with goals and objectives that address needs, along with specially designed instruction and related services necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives. The IEP Team consists of the following: the parent, the building principal/LEA, a special education teachers and a regular education teacher. Other team members may include: the student when appropriate, the school psychologist, public agency representative, other teachers or specialists, other administrative staff, etc. Parents are an integral part of the IEP team and are encouraged to be physically present at the IEP meeting. The district makes every effort to ensure parent participation. The district notifies the parent in writing and makes documented phone calls to make parents aware of the IEP conference and the importance of parent participation. Parents are then presented with a Notice of recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) with which they may agree or disagree. If parents agree, the IEP is implemented. If parents disagree with the recommendation, the issue may be taken to mediation or to a due process hearing.

The Laurel Highlands School District operates a comprehensive continuum of services for special needs students. For the most part identified exceptional students are served in their home school. Types of services available include: Learning Support that is primarily for students with academic learning needs. Life Skills Support that focuses primarily on the need for independent living skills. Emotional Support which addresses social and emotional difficulties, Multiple Disabilities Support which is for students with more than one disability, Physical Support for students who need is the result of a physical disability, Autistic Support for those students diagnosed with Autism and/or Pervasive Development Disorder, Speech/Language Support that is for students who have articulation and/or expressive/receptive language difficulties, Hearing Support for students who are hearing impaired/deaf, Vision Support which is for students who are blind or vi-

(Annual Public Notice of Child Find Activities, cont'd.)

sually impaired, and Gifted Support for those students identified as mentally gifted. The Laurel Highland School District works closely with neighboring school districts and Intermediate Unit # 1 to place students who cannot be served within the district. The small number of students who needs cannot be accommodated in the public school setting can receive services in an approved private school or other licensed facilities at school district expense. No such placement is made without an IEP meeting and parental agreement. Laurel Highlands intends to serve students at the home school or within the district before considering other placements.

If a child does not qualify for special education services, he/she may still be considered a protected handicapped student and require services under Chapter 15. A protected handicapped student is a student who is school aged with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to any aspect of the school program. The Laurel Highlands School District provides each protected handicapped student the aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extra curricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. If you believe your child comes under this classification and is in need of a service to assist him/her in benefiting from his/her education, you should contact your building principal.

The Laurel Highlands School District recognized the need to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in the education records of exceptional children. The Laurel Highlands School District confidentiality Assurance Policy has been prepared as to insure the privacy rights of both the parents and the exceptional child in the collection, maintenance, release, and destruction of these records. The Laurel Highlands School District and its staff are required by Federal law and State and Federal Rules and Regulations to protect the rights of students. The foundation of these rights comes from Federal Legislation entitled the Family Educational rights and Privacy Act of 1974 – FERPA (also known as the Buckley Amendments). All students are protected by the State Regulations contained in Chapter 12 known as Student's Rights and Responsibilities. In addition, State Rules and regulations protect regular and special education students' right and privacy.

School records are always open and available to parents and only to school officials who have legitimate "need to know" information about the child. Disclosure of information means to permit the release, transfer or other communication of education records to any part, by oral, written and / or electronic means. This means that information about a student cannot be shared in conversation without permission. This also applies to other personnel who do not have an educationally relevant reason to possess knowledge student.

The parents of a student or eligible student have the right to inspect and/or challenge their child's or their own educational records, to receive copies of the records, and to have a school official explain the records if requested as outlined in the Laurel Highlands District Policy. The school district will disclose directory information which includes: the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weights and heights of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency of or institution attended by the

(Annual Public Notice of Child Find Activities, cont'd.)

student, and other similar information. Should the parent of a student or eligible student wish to refuse disclosure of this information, a written notice or refusal of disclosure of directory information must be sent to the Principal within twenty (20) days of this public notice. To inspect your child's or your records, contact the Building Principal.

The Laurel Highlands School District will release information from a student's education record without prior consent to officials of the other primary or secondary schools or school systems in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Transcripts to post-secondary institutions in which a student seeks or intends to enroll will be sent upon request of parents of a student or eligible student. Parents, upon written request, may receive a copy of records that may be released by the school district. The parents have the right to request that their child's or their educational records be changed if they are inaccurate, misleading or violate student's rights, and to have a hearing if that request is refused.

A more detailed explanation of these rights, the procedure to follow, and the limitations on the release of records are presented in the school district's policy on the collection, maintenance and release of student records. You may obtain a copy of this policy by contacting the Building Principal.

For further information in the screening procedures, evaluation procedures, and provision of services to protected handicapped students, contact Mr. Jesse T. Wallace, Superintendent of Schools, 304 Bailey Avenue, Uniontown, PA 15401 or call 724-437-2821

Laurel Highlands Spaghetti Dinner



Rebekah Gibbs, Gianna Howard, & Madison Bellotti helped serve spaghetti at the second Friends of Outdoor School "Kids to Camp" Spaghetti Dinner, which was held on November 21 at the high school.

Student and parent volunteers helped prepare and serve food for the "Kids to Camp" Spaghetti



Dinner held on November 21. All proceeds from the event went to lower the student cost for the Laurel Highlands Outdoor School program.



The Mustang Gridiron



by P. J. Savini



The Laurel Highlands Mustangs have ended their season with a winning record of five and four. It is a sign of progress for the proud team, and hopefully one year will turn into a perfect nine and zero season.

The Mustangs work hard day in and day out. Dedicated to the grind, each player gives it their best shot and tries to better the team as a whole. If you are a true Mustang fan, you will be familiar with the phrase “you are only as strong as your weakest link.” The players on the team all live by this phrase. It means that your team is only as strong as its weakest member. The Mustangs have come to truly believe and understand this as they help each other grow on and off the field.

Any hard-working student that is looking for a well-rounded program is welcome to join

the team. The football team has a winter lifting schedule and a summer workout plan. Both are key in building a better team. During the winter, players will do heavy lifting workouts designed to build muscle mass during the offseason. Some lifts include bench press, squat, and power clean which key in on important muscles that are used the most while playing. Summer workouts focus more on running and conditioning. While lifting will still be involved, it will be light. Players will also start to learn plays and formations that will be used throughout the season.

Many people do not realize the benefits this program has to offer. If you are interested in learning, we invite you to join us.

A Community Comes Together. . .

When there is a need, you can always count on those associated with the Laurel Highlands School District to provide assistance. Our students, faculty, administration, and staff are well-known for their community service and quick call to action. We have built a strong commu-



nity dedicated to working together for the common good.

Recently, our cafeteria manager, Sheri David, contacted Liz Dunham, retired high school secretary and cheerleading sponsor, to suggest holding a Spaghetti Dinner to raise funds for a co-worker who needed help. She was prepared to cook with her staff, family and friends. These workers willingly donated their personal time to prepare the food.

From there, Liz picked up the ball and ran, garnering help and donations from a multitude of sources. Liz is a 'people-person,' and loves to do her projects in a 'BIG' way, involving as many people as possible. It's no wonder that the Laurel Highlands community rallied around her and provided unbelievable support.

Help poured in from the school organizations starting with her cheerleaders and Coach Just's football players waiting and cleaning tables. Cafeteria workers cooked the meal work-

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ing with office staff, students, and parents who served. Other coaches, teachers, and parents manned the entrance table, Chinese auction table, and baked goods table. Additionally, our janitorial, maintenance, and security personnel were there to lend a hand.

Donations came not only from the high school through various clubs and personnel, but also from the elementary schools and administration office. The Chinese Auction proudly displayed over 45 beautiful baskets and crafts that guests enjoyed purchasing chances to win.

Everyone was amazed at how well-orchestrated this event was. Liz stated, "It was very heartwarming that so many of LH's family and friends and the co-worker's family and friends came together and did so much to make the night a huge success. So many people helped by sharing in the food preparation, serving, donating their time and/or money, and everything else that was needed to help a dear friend and her family. Thanks to all!!!"



...To Help a Friend



A Day In the Life

by Ashley Klink

Everybody has a daily routine, but wouldn't you love to know what it is like to live a day in the life of a football player, an AP student, or a cheerleader? Each student's day can alternate from day-to-day and also person-to-person even though we all might start our school day around 7:20. Here is a look inside some of the daily lives of our students at Laurel Highlands High School.

A lot of dedication goes into those football games you go to see every Friday night. Running back, P. J. Savini says, "Football is mentally and physically challenging." Typically, football players practice more than 12 hours a week, not including other hours of commitment. Football players are also given specific instructions from Coach Just. Before home games they are supposed to sit in silence as they eat their dinner, and at away games the players are told to not talk on the bus. This quiet time allows the players to focus on the game. During the game, if they are not playing on the field, they have to stand shoulder to shoulder. If the football team loses a game on away games, they also have to be quiet on the bus ride home. But if they win they are allowed to celebrate. These restrictions that they are given really unify the teammates.

As a cheerleader, there is nothing more exciting than attending each game as they cheer on their favorite team, but being a cheerleader is not as easy as most people would believe. They practice weekly for 2 hours, and Kaleigh Teets says, "Most of the squad practices even more on their own per day." In addition, our LH cheerleaders are required to perform community service. They have visited nursing homes in the past and participate in the Heart Walk, which is held here in Fayette County by the American Heart Association. So the next time you think

about the cheerleaders, try to realize what they actually put in to being a cheerleader.

Imagine doing multiple sports and trying to juggle them all. Brooke Kusniar who does basketball and volleyball says doing multiple sports is "time-consuming and demanding." Even though basketball tends to be more challenging, she enjoys it more, but always tries to give equal amount of effort to each sport. The work and time she puts into both, volleyball and basketball, are definitely shown out on the court when she plays. She also manages to balance both, school and sports, which can be hard, but Brooke has the dedication to handle it. To do various sports doesn't always come easy when also having to keep good grades in school, but some people seem to balance it all just like Brooke Kusniar.

Don't you wish you could be at the top of your class? To do so you have to have the motivation and drive to take more difficult classes such as AP courses and honors. Senior, Delaney Hostetler-Greco, takes six AP classes and is runner up for class of 2016 valedictorian. When asked how she does so well, Delaney said, "I do upwards of six hours a night on homework depending on the night." That averages out to one hour a night for each class. This also explains how she is so successful.

As you can see students at Laurel Highlands put a lot of work into activities, sports, and their school work to try and make our school the best. Whether it's staying up all night to get that 100% on a test so that they have a chance at being the valedictorian for their class, or having long hours of practice to win the next big game, it is shown through our school that there are many devoted, hardworking, and committed students. Now you know what it is like to live the life of some of our most devoted students.

High School Bucket List

by Natalie Novak

“What if?” Do yourself a favor and don’t let those two words be on repeat in your mind after high school is over. Almost everyone ends up saying to themselves, “If only I would have done that when I was in high school.” Even if you don’t know it, you’re living the good ole days right now. This means you have the perfect opportunity to create your high school bucket list and not skip out on your only high school experience.

First thing on the high school bucket list is to find that group of people that you just click with. Once you find them, be the teenagers you see in movies. Aspire to be like Ferris Bueller or even Sandra Dee. Pull all-nighters, take part in that ultimate game of truth or dare, and play classic pranks. You’re only this young once, so now is the time to be carefree with the people you enjoy most. Also be sure that you act proud of



where you go to school and show some school spirit. Go to that Friday night football game. Dress up, sit in the student section, and cheer like you’ve never cheered

before because you know it’d be magnificent to have a winning team. Go and see the spring musical while you’re at it. It’s exceptionally neat to know that those are your peers that are performing in front of you and not professionals. Now, stop what you’re doing and look around you. Do you see that kid sitting all alone, not talking? Talk to him!

You can now say that you made someone’s day better. This goes the same for if there is someone that you want to be friends with, but think you can’t talk to them. Go do it as



soon as POSSIBLE! You are guaranteed to regret it if you don’t! Also there is no way you’re going to have fun and make memories if you’re not



involved in something. It doesn’t matter if it’s your senior or freshman year, joining an extra-curricular activity is 100% worth it. You’d even have automatic close friends if you were to join a sports team. ANYTHING is better than

being a part of nothing. Before you graduate, be sure to take a chance and go to a high school dance. You only have to spare one night of your life and in return you’ll have lasting memories.

Don’t let yourself be that guy who’s just sitting alone watching Netflix, because your teenage years will be over in a blink of your eye. Suddenly you’ll be thirty years old, balding, stuck in a dead end job thinking, “Wow, why did



I waste my high school years doing nothing?” Follow this bucket list and you’ll be sure to have memories that will last for eternity. Make your high school experience one to remember because life is short, and high school is even shorter.



Challenged Cadets

Mustang Air Force JROTC is participating in the eighth season of CyberPatriot's National Youth Cyber Defense Competition. Beginning in October 2015, cadets compete in the All Service Division against similar teams across the country. This is the first year LHAFJROTC is competing.

CyberPatriot is the National Youth Cyber Education Program created by the Air Force Association to inspire high school and middle school students toward careers in cybersecurity or other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines critical to our nation's future. The program features an annual competition, in which teams across the United

States and Canada, as well as from Department of Defense Dependent Schools abroad, compete in a series of online rounds for a chance to earn an all-expenses-paid trip to the in-person CyberPatriot National Finals Competition in Baltimore, MD in the spring. There, students have the opportunity to win scholarships and network with industry leaders. Cadets have finished Level 1 of the Cyberpatriot and have earned the right to compete in Level 2 during the first part of December. The core team is comprised of Cadets Elaine Nassar, Shannon Mong, Rickie Reed, Paul Chamberlain, Adam Piwowar, and Haley Adams.



JROTC Academic Bowl

A four member team of Air Force JROTC cadets recently competed in Level 1 of the JROTC Academic Bowl. This competition is hosted by The College Options Foundation and intended to enrich the academic development of JROTC cadets and assist them in their preparation for higher education. Some of the many benefits of participating in the Academic Bowl include improving SAT/ACT scores, increasing interest in college admissions, and boosting unit esprit de corps. Cadets Jen Engle, Sam Lucas, Jacey Halfhill, and Jeff Butler comprised the team. Results have not yet been released.



Hit the Bullseye

The Laurel Highlands Air Force JROTC Rifle Team recently brought home two first place team trophies after firing in postal competitions. Top Shooter for Match #1 of the Southwest JROTC Postal League was Cadet Morgan Cooley with a 212 out of 300. Rounding out the other top spots were Cadets Laura Grass, Joe Rockhill, and Shannon Mong. In the Prone Position, LH shooters swept the top four spots while taking three of the top four spots in the Kneeling and Standing positions. In Match #2 of the SW Pennsylvania JROTC Postal League Cadet Rockhill edged out Cadet Cooley for top team honors. Both scored a 204 however Cadet Rockhill recorded more bullseyes from the 10 meter shooting distance in all three shooting positions. Cadets Grass and O. Neimann joined cadets Rockhill and Cooley in forming the winning team. Overall, LH marksmen earned 9 of the 16 individual awards available.

Eighteen members of the Rifle Team also recently competed in the National Air Force JROTC Postal Firing Match but the results have yet to be posted.



SENIOR DATES TO REMEMBER

- March 8** Cap and Gown Distribution
- March 9** Sarris Chocolate Pickup after 11 a.m.
- May 7** LH Kennywood Day
- May 13** Prom, Lakeview Resort (Grand March, 4 p.m.)
- May 14** Post Prom at Hershey Park
- May 25 & 27** Mandatory Graduation Practice 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.
- May 31** Graduation (Tentative)

Road To Success

by Gigi Beatty

The Laurel Highlands Girls Softball team is on the road to recovery and success. After finishing their 2014-2015 regular season on the wrong foot, the girls look to bounce back and obtain their first victory in this upcoming spring. Sophomore and catcher Jenna Bliss shows her excitement for the regular season by saying: "I look forward to the spring season. Being behind the plate is the best feeling."

Heading into the new school year with a clean slate, the Mustangs showed much improvement during their Fall Ball season. The team's record was 4-3-3, a sizeable difference compared to the previous year. The team saw many girls step up to the plate and join the team. Also returning to the field is senior and pitcher, MacKenzie LaClair. After two long years of being out due to a torn labrum injury, she says "It's great to be back out on the field with my team. This year we are going to go out and play our hearts out, so I hope everyone is ready!"

The Mustangs' fall ball season was eventful, playing 10 games. Cold weather cut the season short and heavy rain caused another cancellation of a double-header. Games were played with time limits, which is why so many ended in ties. Wins were against Uniontown (twice), California, and Brownsville. Losses were to Yough (twice) and Elizabeth Forward once. Ties were versus Brownsville (twice) and Elizabeth Forward.

Players from grades 7 through 12 played in the Mon-Yough fall softball league. Games were played on Sundays and participation varied due to previous commitments, but the girls who participated included: Rachel Frederick, Gigi Beatty, MacKenzie LaClair, Jenna Bliss, Mercedes Sickles, Megan Riffle, Rebecca Marinelli, Mia Fuller, Kaitlyn Bricker, Danielle Jones, Hannah Duranko, Jordan Saghy, Shelby Michael, Han-

nah Blackstone, Hailie Rusko, Allison Lowery, Emma Bliss, Abby Beatty, and Sydney LaClair.

During the team's offseason the girls take part in winter workouts, which include strength and agility training, such as the speed ladder and lifting weights. The girls have also decided as a group to organize new team bonding activities in hopes of bringing the team closer than ever before. According to Senior Samantha Bloom, the activities are a great addition. She states, "I'm really excited to see how the new team bonding activities affect our season and help us to grow closer as a team."

Head Coach Joe Pergar briefly speaks about the previous and upcoming softball season, saying "I commend those ladies who participated in this year's fall softball league. Gaining experience through great opportunities such as these exhibition contests will better prepare our players for our spring season. Winter workouts have begun as we prepare our bodies for the season ahead, but nothing is better than a real game experience. I'm very optimistic about this season; if we put the team first and stay healthy, I expect great things from this group!"

The future looks very promising ladies!



Controversial Candidates

by Alex Mears

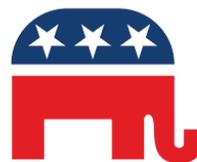
The 2016 presidential election is shaping up to be one of the most exciting contests in recent memory. In the Democratic race we have front runner Hillary Clinton with Bernie Sanders slowly picking up ground. The Republican race is more exciting with more than 10 candidates currently fighting for the nomination. Donald Trump is the front-runner as of now, but Ben Carson is quickly making up ground and could soon surpass Trump.



It seems that controversy follows the Clintons everywhere they go. During Bill Clinton's presidency he was faced with numerous infidelity scandals, and Hillary also has some scandals surrounding her, most notably the controversy surrounding the terrorist attacks on the US Embassy in Benghazi on September 11, 2012 while Clinton was serving as America's Secretary of State. Many say that Clinton signed off on a document which lessened the amount of secu-

rity surrounding the embassy in Benghazi. Her fellow candidate Bernie Sanders also stirs up some strife. His uncensored demeanor and views on marijuana and gun control continue to upset numerous voters. Although many people are distracted by these things, Clinton and Sanders are two great candidates and this will prove to be an interesting race.

Where to begin with the Republican race? It is filled with numerous colorful candidates from Donald Trump to Jeb Bush. Although Trump is the most recognizable candidate he is closely trailed by many impressive candidates. The closest person to Trump as of now is former neurosurgeon Ben Carson. Carson, since he is now in the spotlight, is now taking fire because of some events in his past, most notably his claimed scholarship to West Point. He is getting criticism because West Point does not give out scholarships. Although Trump and Carson are the current poll leaders I am keeping my eyes on



I am keeping my eyes on Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, and Carly Fiorina. All three have done consistently well in the debates and are seeing a gradual rise in the polls. But no matter how much we speculate now we'll just have to wait until primaries to see who will get the nod for their respective parties.



It's All About the Experience

by Max Mears

What a season it has been so far, with the shining rookies such as Karl Anthony-Towns of the Minnesota Timberwolves to the spectacular and dazzling D'Angelo Russell of the Los Angeles Lakers the race for Rookie of the Year will be as close as ever. With the Western Conference being competitive like last year, many stars are going to have to step up their game if they want to cement their spot in the playoffs come April. The newly improved San Antonio Spurs are looking to be dominant as many expected them to be. The Spurs made some serious moves during the off season and signed former Portland Trailblazer superstar LaMarcus Aldridge. Aldridge is currently averaging 15.3 points while he still tries to become familiar playing in the new offense run by the future Hall of Famer coach Gregg Popovich. The Golden State Warriors, to no surprise, stand atop the Western Conference. While the Cleveland Cavaliers are the number one seed in the mediocre Eastern Conference

The NBA's leading scorer Stephen Curry is averaging 32.7 points per game. Compared to last

years scoring leader Russell Westbrook who totaled 28.1 points per game, Curry could top Westbrooks unforgettable year. The injury sustained by Kevin Durant caused the Oklahoma City Thunder to rely on a few role players and the pure physicality of Russell Westbrook to lift them over teams. Kristaps Porzingis, in his rookie season, was booed during his selection during the NBA Draft. His 13.2 points and 8.8 rebounds per game is proving to be enough to please his once disloyal Knicks fans. His recent play has opened the eyes of coaches across the league and has many wondering how he could possibly be stopped.

As we approach All Star Weekend there are some teams that no doubt have a chance to win it all, while other teams will have to prove themselves during the second half of the season. It will be interesting to see if the Warriors will indeed break the single season win record which is held by the Chicago Bulls at 72 games in 1995-'96 or if the Philadelphia 76ers will even break double digit wins.

High School Candid



Junior, Julia Capuzzi, is working on her project for Advanced Painting.



Junior and Drum Major, Tess Vanek, is getting warmed up for the Christmas band concert.

Journey To Mars

by Gigi Beatty

NASA has plans for a revolutionary mission, a journey to Mars. The Red Planet had conditions that were suitable for life in its past, and NASA hopes to discover evidence of life. Thus answering the ultimate question: Does life exist beyond Earth?

A fleet of robotic explorers and spacecraft has been gathering information about Mars for over 40 years. This knowledge is being used for taking the first steps toward human exploration. Radiation samples from the surface of the Red Planet have been measured to help plan how to protect astronauts who will explore there.

An important player in the Journey to Mars is NASA's Curiosity rover. The car-sized rover has made the first detection of nitrogen on the surface of the planet. Nitrogen is essential for all life forms. This discovery adds to the evidence that Mars was once habitable for living beings. The Curiosity rover has also helped prove that the planet could once hold water in lakes for an extended period of time.

Research verifies that the planet has two permanent ice caps at the north and south poles. Just recently, Mars rovers have dug into the surface and found water and traces of nutrients only found from living life forms. NASA suggests that a vast ocean once existed on the planet, larger

than Earth's Arctic Ocean. It is unknown why such an amount of water, enough to cover the entire planet, was lost to space.

The path for exploration begins with the International Space Station. The astronauts at the space station are testing vital technology for human health in deep space, and will gain knowledge of how the human body changes while in space.

The next step towards deep space travel is NASA's Asteroid Redirect Mission. Four crew members aboard the spacecraft Orion will capture and redirect a boulder from a large asteroid to orbit the moon. Orion will serve as the exploration vehicle that will be the safest, most advanced spacecraft ever built. The astronauts will collect data and samples during their two orbits around the Earth, and then return home in the 2020's. The information collected will help scientists test the capabilities needed for sending astronauts to Mars in the 2030's.

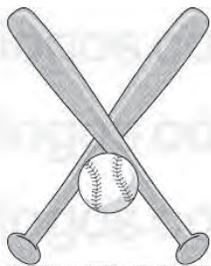
Scientists are working every day towards the rush for human civilization on the Red Planet. Mr. Botti, our local scientist, had this to say: "They should give 1/1000 of 1% of the money they will spend to me." Good luck, Mr. Botti. Don't wait too long for that check!



Bucco Blues

by Timmy Rice

Aside from the fact that Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday, every November to March I suffer from the off-season baseball blues. Ever since the Pirates' playoff campaign came to an end, my life just hasn't been the same. Watching the Mets and Cubs just does not provide the same excitement level as my Buccos. I may not even watch the World Series because the idea of another team winning it all makes me want to cry.



This off-season just seems more depressing because of the other changes that come along with it. Rumors that Mark Melancon will not resign with the team have been spreading throughout the league, Neal Huntington may leave for the Braves, and not to mention Pedro Alvarez

and the Pirates parting ways. Neil Walker was very recently traded to the New York Mets for left handed pitcher Jonathan Niese and pitcher J. A. Happ signed a new deal with the Blue Jays worth 36 million dollars. However, with players leaving the team that means that other players will be joining the Pirates and this does give me some joy entering the 2016 season. Chris Davis is a free agent this year and there are whispers that the Pirates are showing some interest. A very slim chance exists that they'll sign him because they often don't go after big name free agents, but the idea of them showing interest makes me excited for the upcoming season.

I know that these Bucco Blues will eventually subside. And when they do, I'll be as happy as a kid on Christmas morning. But in the meantime, I am stuck watching the NHL and watching how my fantasy football team is doing.

LH Musicians March with Macy's

On Thanksgiving Day, there Laurel Highlands Marching Band members had the privilege to make the appearance of a life time. This was the second trip for snare drum player Jordan Saghy, daughter of Scott and Paula Saghy. Joining her were seniors Landon Higginbotham and Allie Hartsek, also members of the LH drumline.

They accomplished what many high school band member wish to do, being chosen for a coveted spot in Macy's Great American Marching Band.

While thousands of people lined the streets, watched out of their window, or like the many million Americans, watched it live of TV., our

three premiere drummers were preparing to perform along with 185 other members in the Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The event took place in no other than New York City.

The parade begins at Central Park and makes its way to Macy's at Herald Square. When the band arrives at Macy's Herald Square, they perform for celebrity hosts, guests standing on the streets, and over fifty-million people watching from their TV. on NBC.

Congratulations to Jordan Saghy, Landon Higginbotham, Allie Hartsek and Mr. Santore for a job well done!

Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

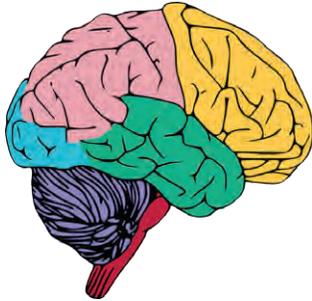
Laurel Highlands students, Landon Higginbotham, Allie Hartsek, and Jordan Saghy, performed in the Macy's Great American Marching Band on Thanksgiving Day in New York City.



Brain Power

by Mary DeFazio

Brain power improves by brain use, just as our bodily strength grows with exercise.”-A.N. Wilson. I find this to be true, and lately it seems like I have almost no brain power at all. I can barely



remember things that happened from day to day, let alone try to remember what year the American Revolution started. Focusing on anything has become a serious struggle. Learn-

ing things in school has become increasingly harder, and I think its because of my phone...

Neuroscientist Ian Robertson polled 3,000 people and found that the younger ones were unable to recall standard personal info. When asked a relative's birth date, 87 percent of respondents over age 50 could recite it, while less than 40 percent of those under 30 could do so. And when he asked them their own phone number, one-third of the younger generation didn't know it. They all had to pull out their phones, and that really says something.

That simple gesture tells the whole story. A study led by Antti Oulasvirta, a senior researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Informatics, shows that the average person pulls their phone out 60 times a day. Smart phones can store so much memory these days, why even bother trying to remember it yourself. If I can pull out my phone and just look up my number, why should I try to remember it? My phone is an infinite well of knowledge. During an argument, I can look up information on the subject at hand and have facts to back up my point instantly. I no longer need to

remember useless facts, or even useful ones for that matter. My phone can remember everything for me. Without even realizing it, we've handed off what has been one of our most important brain functions for years, to our phones and computers.

People over the age of 50 will tell you that this is taking away a part of what makes us human. Honestly, I couldn't disagree more. Using the internet to beef up my arguments has made me feel smarter than ever. I don't even need to have read the book you're talking about, to have an understanding of the plot and characters. All the information is just a few clicks away. While this is all very helpful, its also incredibly terrifying. With my phone in my hand, I'm an expert on every subject there is, but how much do I really know without it? When my battery dies will I become powerless? Does my reliance on my phone to remember things make it impossible for me to remember something on my own?

Now that I don't have to remember so many facts, my brain has been finding other ways to occupy its time. I find myself daydreaming more and more. And studying for tests has become harder and harder. My brain no longer needs to remember that much, so trying to learn facts about Biology has become almost impossible. Its as though my brain has become lazy. I can never pay attention to something for a long period of time. Sitting in class makes my brain drift within minutes, and forget trying to focus on reading a book. After one page I'm back to daydreaming about nothing. My memory is worse and my schoolwork has suffered, but I really like scrolling through my twitter feed. So I don't think I'll be giving up my phone anytime soon.



CAREER DAY



Pictured (L to R): Keith Medley, Robert Lowery, Jo Ann Jankoski, Jennifer Anto, Trooper Fischer, Gina Jones, Trooper Krofcheck, Dave Meredith

LHMS Invites Speakers for Career Day

For Career Week, LHMS welcomed speakers from Penn State University, Eberly Campus, and the Pennsylvania State Police. Working with Gina Jones from PSU, students attended presentations from professionals in the fields of engineering, mining, nursing, social services, and Penn State Student Life. Also, Trooper Fischer

and Trooper Krofcheck from the PA State Police presented to the students about life as a police officer. Students from 6th, 7th, and 8th grade had the opportunity to attend all of the presentations. LHMS would like to thank all of the professionals who took time out of their busy schedules to participate with our students.

Students Honor Fayette County Veterans

Eighth-grade Middle School students in Paula O'Connell's Journalism class recently created a tribute to local veterans with the production of "Local Heroes - Honoring Our Fayette County Veterans." Students researched, created questions and conducted filmed interviews of our veterans who fought in WWII, and the Vietnam, Gulf, and Iraq Wars. The video will air throughout February on Atlantic Broadband cable station CUTV, Channel 17. It will also be on YouTube, titled South Union Television.

Middle School Principal Michael Rozgony and Mrs. O'Connell had received a grant from The Consortium for Public Education last spring, which provided the money for video equipment to film the interviews. The project created a unique educational experience for students, who learned through first-hand accounts, what it's like to fight in a war. Bringing the veterans and students together not only allowed the participants to learn the causes of these wars, but also what it felt like to travel to a foreign country as a military member serving in both combat and non-combat roles.

"The veterans were great role models for our students, as they had lived their lives demonstrating courage and dedication to their country," said O'Connell. "Their obvious pride in their country, and their willingness to make sacrifices to serve it, was inspirational to our students.

While journalism students planned and performed the interviews, many Honors English students had the opportunity to hear the veterans as guest speakers to their classes. We tried to include as many students as time would allow, to have the opportunity to hear the veterans," said O'Connell.

Students who participated in the filming and interviewing process were Kate Prettyman, Franchesca Prah, Abby Beatty, Zach Swartz, Anthony Stepich, Joe Chisler, Justin Brestensky, Kaitlyn Adams, Maddie Krch, Patty Mattis, Sierra Showman, Brandon Blaney, Tyler Shaffer, Pat Tressler, Danny David, Taylor Conroy, Jordan Collins, Savannah Richards, Katlynn Tanner, Gabby Cummings, Lori Miller, Ashton Evans, Ronnie Legarth, Tyler Morcom, Rachel Duncan, Holly Oris and Danielle Evans.

Special thanks to the participants: L.H. Middle School Principal, Michael Rozgony and faculty members, Paul Eckert, Randy Geller and James Shwallon, Security Guard, Bill Pear, and local veterans, Joseph Kovalcik, James Sileo, Ken Noga, Tracy Landman, Glenn Nielsen, Dave Whoolery, Robert Cooper, Brian Sheetz, Keith Zahron and Brandon Rumbaugh.

Mustang Round-Up will continue this spring with a Middle School documentary on careers.

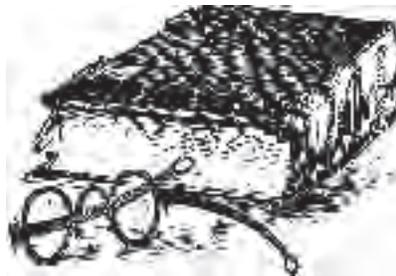




National Junior Honor Society Induction

On May 6, 2015 Laurel Highlands Middle School inducted 66 students into the National Junior Honor Society. Each student must keep their GPA above 3.80, have no discipline infractions, and no more than four unexcused absences. Another requirement is to do community service during the school year, as well as a group project.

This year the NJHS will be working with St. Jude’s Children Hospital. Lastly, officers were voted on by the members. They are as follows: Frederick Junko, President, Jordan O’Brien, Vice President, Giavanna Gulino, Secretary, Abby Chambers, Historian, and Haylee Rapp, Public Relations. The following students were inducted as members of the 2015-2016 school year:





Madison Adams
 Jacob Albright
 Abigail Beatty
 Laura Berenbrok
 Justin Brestensky
 Abigail Chambers
 Sydney Chiado
 Joseph Chisler
 Jason Cooper
 Matthew D'annolfo
 Skylar Ferens
 Abigail Filitsky
 Kaylea Gallagher
 Carin Gaydos
 Olivia Glusica
 Alexis Gomez

Halle Greene
 Daniel Grimm
 Zoe Gudenburr
 Hannah Guess
 Giavanna Gulino
 Alexandra Haragos
 Daniel Izzi
 Frederick Junko
 Ronan Kearns
 Brendan Kopich
 Jurnee Lantz
 Allison Lowery
 Brenden Marzano
 Colby McCormick
 Jillian Mihalko
 Jolene Mihalko

Ashley Miner
 Benjamin Mosier
 Garrett Myers
 Jordan O'Brien
 Ashley Over
 Paul Pohuly
 Franchessca Prah
 Katherine Prettyman
 Elizabeth Purnell
 Hope Purnell
 Jonathan Quarrick
 Parker Radolec
 Haylee Rapp
 Savannah Raymond
 Madison Richards
 Jaclyn Rider

Jenna Roscoe
 Kaleb Scott
 Sierra Showman
 Cameryn Simpson
 Taylor Smith
 Timothy Smith
 Sarah Swartz
 Zachary Swartz
 Makenna Tressler
 Andino Vecchiolla
 Jillian Verbus
 Ryan Voyten
 Nathan Zimcosky
 Kaia Zungri





Front Row: (L to R) Brandon Blaney, Kaylee Yanosky, Abby Filitsky, Sidney Petrowski, Lori Miller, Haylee Rapp. Back Row: (L to R) Mrs Bota, Danielle Evans, Cheyenne Franklin, Patty Mattis, Jaclyn Rider, Madison Krch, Joey Conley, Mr. Rozgony

PINK OUT

Laurel Highlands Middle School held its first annual PINK OUT on Friday, October 23rd, 2015. Pink T-shirts were sold and all proceeds were donated to a charity supporting Breast Cancer Awareness. This year's charity was Elana's Blessings. Elana's Blessing is a new organization formed to help improve the self-esteem and quality of life for women fighting breast cancer. They aspire to give women a day of beauty and relaxation by helping them look and feel their best. With the beauty sessions, they hope to create a sense of support, confidence, community and courage. For more information about the organization, you can visit www.elanasblessings.org. Through the t-shirt sales, LHMS raised over \$800 for the organization. Everyone at Elana's Blessings is very grateful to LHMS for their support.





E-Days

Students from Laurel Highlands Middle School in grades 6, 7 & 8 participated in “E-Days” at Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus. Organized by Mr. Dave Meredith, the event offered several hands-on activities all related to the fields of engineering and science. The students were also invited to visit Advanced Acoustics Concepts to learn more about different types of engineering fields. The students enjoyed the wonderful experience offered by Mr. Meredith and they are already looking forward to the annual event next year!



Students Win Academic Quiz League Tournament



Students from Laurel Highlands Middle School represented Laurel Highlands School District in the Tri-County Academic Quiz League for the 2015-2016 academic season. The Junior League Junior Varsity team finished fourth in the regular season but went undefeated in the tournament, making them the T-CAL Junior League Junior Varsity champions for the third year in a row.

Members of the LHMS Varsity team include from left to right: (Front) Bella Miller, Anna Smith, Hannah Sutton, Maddy Myers, and Ms. Janine Schuessler, coach (Back) Paul Pohuly, Raymond Zheng, Derek Nastasi, Brett Lemansky, and Colby McCormick

Students Compete in Academic Quiz League Tournament

Students from Laurel Highlands Middle School represented Laurel Highlands School District in the Tri-County Academic Quiz League for the 2015-2016 academic season. The Junior League Varsity team finished fourth in the regular season and third in the tournament.

Members of the LHMS Junior Varsity team include from left to right: (front) Hannah Proud, Morgan Murray, Haile Rapano, Alexandra Junko, and Karleigh Brant (back) Mrs. Jennifer Neill, coach, Noah Matthews, Tucker Golden, and Nicholas Gabriel



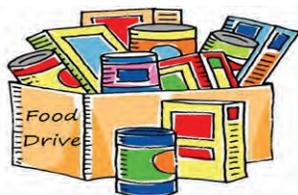


Pictured from left to right are: (front) Michaella Rivero, Veronica Shields, Mrs. Jessica Scott, assistant principal, and Anna Smith (back) Mrs. Amber Hughes, student council co-sponsor, Justin Smith, Kody Stenger, Emma Scott, Hannah Sutton, and Mrs. Jennifer Neill, teacher.

Student Council Sponsors Food and Clothing Drive

The Student Council of Laurel Highlands Middle School recently sponsored a Thanksgiving food drive. Faculty and students in grades 6, 7, & 8 brought in boxed and canned food items for the people in our community that are in need. The generosity of all who donated was

overwhelming! Food items were donated to the St. Vincent de Paul food bank in Uniontown. Students also donated gently used clothing and food items to the Uniontown City Mission, spearheaded by Mr. Paul Eckert, LHMS teacher.



Food Drive



Students Attend 'Girls of Steel FTC' Camp



Pictured from left to right: Alexandra Junko (grade 6) Jurnee Lantz (grade 8) and Hannah Sutton (grade 7).

Three students from Laurel Highlands Middle School attended the *Girls of Steel* FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Robotics Camp from August 3-7, 2015 at the California University Center for Innovation in Canonsburg, PA. Carnegie Mellon University hosted the week-long camp where the girls learned from high school mentors how to design, build, and program robots using real-world math and science concepts.

The girls worked in groups using Snap Circuits, Tetrax Kit Robots, Hummingbird Kit Robots, and FIRST Tech Challenge Kits. Students developed problem-solving and team-building skills while working all week to solve the FTC challenge. On Friday, the groups showcased their work and presented their robots and solutions to parents and students.





Celebrating American Education Week

The halls were filled with superheroes, beautifully dressed girls and handsome boys, mismatched clothes, and students dressed as their future careers as Clark Elementary celebrated American Education Week. It was wonderful

to see so many students participating in theme days to celebrate the importance of quality public education. A big thank you to all teachers, administration, and staff from the students at Clark Elementary!



Miss Brewer's class of superheroes!!!



All of Miss Brewer's room agrees, mismatched clothes day was easy and fun!



Cage Senchur dressed as a construction worker for his future career.



Emma Jacobs dressed as her future career in the healthcare industry.

R.W. Clark Career Day

On Thursday, October 22nd, R.W. Clark held its career day. This year marked the first year that the entire school took part in the event. Students enjoyed rotating throughout the day, meeting our wonderful presenters, and learning more about their professions. We had a total of 22 presenters who graciously shared their time and knowledge with our students. A few highlights were that Neubauers Flower shop let students arrange flowers to take home, Columbia Gas brought along their mascot “Digger Dog”, and Nemaocolin brought in a dog, cat, turtle, fennec fox, and a lizard. We also had Coach Just speak with groups of students about football and the qualities required for teamwork that can be applied in all aspects of life. To the enjoyment of the students, Clark’s very own Mrs. Braddock talked about being a dance teacher, facilitated demonstrations, and taught the students some moves! The Clark staff hosted an amazing lunch for the presenters provided by Nicole Olson, a local farmer who also presented! The students of Clark walked away informed and excited about all the career choices that were introduced to them.



Pie an Owl

On September 25th the students of R.W. Clark raised \$375 for the LH Academic Foundation through their now annual “Pie an Owl” event. This event coincides with Laurel Highlands Spirit Day activities.

In the weeks leading up to the event, students purchased chances to smash a pie in their favorite staff member’s face. On the day of the event the students line the hillside behind the school in anticipation of being chosen. Individual staff members then draw the name of the student who will “serve them their pie.”

The event was a huge success in promoting school spirit, raising money for an organization that has generously funded so many classroom projects, and further solidifying the bond between the Clark staff and their students!



Clark student Dallas Nation “pies” owl, Mrs. Brewer during their “Pie an Owl” event

Thanksgiving Rotation Day

On November 24th, the Kindergarten classes at R.W. Clark Elementary participated in their annual Thanksgiving Rotation Day.

Each year classes rotate through other classrooms to learn about topics that pertain to Thanksgiving. This year we learned about Native Americans and their culture, Pilgrims, and the first Thanksgiving.

We completed many crafts, listened to multiple stories, and worked hard. It was a great way to begin our Thanksgiving week!



Pictured is Miss Brewer's Kindergarten class.



Operation Christmas Child

R.W. Clark students and staff participated in the shoe box collection for Operation Christmas Child. Students and staff brought in items such as, tooth paste, toothbrushes, soap, washcloths, school supplies, and small toys to fill the boxes. The shoe boxes are sent during the holiday season to children around the world who are not as fortunate as many of us.

This year we collected enough items to pack 57 shoe boxes and raised \$329 to donate toward the shipping cost.





Gingerbread Houses

Hatfield Fifth grade students from Mrs. Radcliffe and Mrs. Smith's homerooms recently placed second in the PPG Gingerbread House display contest. On Thursday, November 12th, students and parents gathered in the all-purpose room for a night of gingerbread house decorating. Each child was given their own piece of gingerbread to decorate and contribute to the display. In addition to submitting the display, the students also donated \$100 to the Children's Hospital Free Care Fund on behalf of Hatfield Elementary School. A special thank you goes out to all of the students and parents who participated in this event. Not only was this a fun holiday activity for students, it also provided the opportunity for them to experience the true meaning of the holiday season.



Holiday Food Drive

Hatfield students collected food for local community members for the Thanksgiving holiday. The generosity of these students was a lesson in compassion and sharing. Congratulations to Mrs. Ferguson's classroom for collecting the most donations.



Dairy Farmer Visits Hatfield

Rick Allen, from Allen Dairy Farm, visited Hatfield on October 20. He brought a calf named Wendy. Mr. Allen shared with students the importance of education in any future career. Students were given the opportunity to pet Wendy as well ask questions about dairy farming.



Career Day

On October 21, Hatfield Elementary School held a Career Day. Students in grades K-5 had the opportunity to learn about a variety of careers throughout the day.

Students rotated to visit selected career speakers throughout the day and were engaged in hands on career related activities. As students entered each classroom they had their Career Day Passport stamped according to the selected career. Students took notes and asked meaningful questions to incorporate into career related writing activities in their classrooms. Students were given the opportunity to create their own artwork, dance and see how large tires are retreaded. Others were able to learn about

chemistry, pharmacy, pet grooming/training, health care and law enforcement.

Twenty-one community members volunteered their time and expertise to share aspects of their careers with Hatfield students. The career speakers focused on the relevance of education at the primary level and related the impact of elementary school classes on their career success.

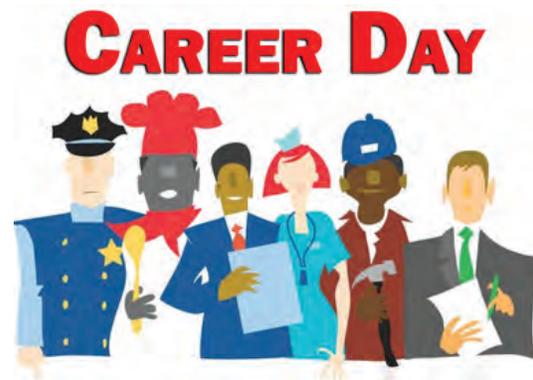
Planning for the event began in September under the direction of Mrs. Lori Ferguson. Through the collaboration and teamwork of Hatfield's Staff this was a memorable event for the students. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who volunteered and made Hatfield's Career Day a huge success!

Special thanks to all of the following buisnesses and professionals:

*Lori Coffman,
Ruff'N'It Doggie Day Spa
Jim John, Shrader Retreading
Bart Lemansky, Pennsylvania State Police
Dave Kaiser, Attorney
Rob Reed, Fed Ex
Sherry Rider, Dogs and Company
Sara Belch, Nurse
Touchstone Center for Arts
Melody Houck and Ariel Laight,
Houck Dance School
Pam Moore, Uniontown Mall
Nicholle Jenkins DVM and Jessica Mahoney,
Woodlands Animal Care Center
Barry Russell, Optometrist
Samantha Zavatchen McCahill, Pharmacist
Beth Santore, Therapist
John James, Connellsville Police Officer
John Detrick, First Energy
Chuck Michael, Principal
Chelsea Kurichko, Physical Therapy Assistant
Mike Rozgony, Principal
Riley Harbarger, Mylan Pharmaceuticals*



Pharmacist, Samantha Zavatchen McCahill with students





Jim John with Schrader Reateading



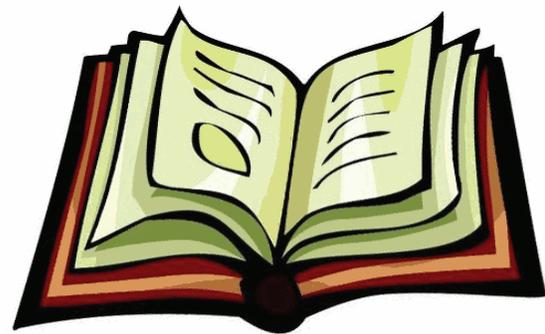
Students with Touchstone Center for Crafts



Book Fair

To kick off the fall book fair, students dressed as their favorite storybook characters.

Pictured from left to right: Row 1: Logan Carlson, Bobby Jennings, Helena Cumpston. Row 2: Mark Reed, Nick Crouch, Mrs. Ferguson, Gauge Clingan, Delaney Russell, Paislie Belch.



Crazy Hat Day

Students participated in Crazy Hat Day for a great cause. All money donated for Crazy Hat Day was donated to “A Veterans Place” to help homeless veterans. Thank you to Fiesta Azteca for the awesome prizes!



Local Veteran Visits Hatfield

Local Marine Corp veteran, Brandon Rumbaugh and US Army veterans Josh Reed and Chaz Pinkney visited the students at Hatfield Elementary and inspired them to always honor and respect our United States Veterans. Their stories were very different, but their love for our country and our many freedoms was paramount.

Brandon expressed how blessed he was by the compassion and generosity of others while recovering at Walter Reed Hospital and later when he returned to Uniontown. He shared his story of service to our country, which tragical-

ly led to the loss of both of his legs, but not to his passion and concern for all of our men and women in service. Helping our many homeless veterans is Brandon's main focus and to draw attention to this need, he lived as a homeless veteran at five corners in Uniontown for the month of November. He effectively shed light upon a very important issue while raising money for the charity "A Veteran's Place". Hatfield students were so moved by Brandon's message that they raised the funds and were proud to present him with a check for \$900 to "A Veteran's Place."



Pumpkin, Pumpkin

Students in Mrs. Ferguson's first grade class had fun with pumpkins. Students used their pumpkins for a fun math lesson on estimating, counting by tens, and grouping.

Students began by weighing pumpkins and counting how many ribs each pumpkin had. Then, based on their observations each student gave an estimate of how many seeds would be in each pumpkin. Students then began counting the seeds and placing them in groups of ten on paper plates. After all the seeds were on the plates, students then counted by tens and made groups of 100. In the end students found that one pumpkin had 678 seeds and the other had 423.



Ryan Revak, Jude Packrone, Ava Ruvalcaba, Aija Thomas, Kha'mille Randolph, Logan Carlson, Paislie Belch, Maddox Wallace, Jett Yauger



Charlie Batch Visits Hutchinson

Christmas came early for some Hutchinson students. Former Pittsburgh Steeler, Charlie Batch, visited Hutchinson Elementary in October. He brought “Batch Packs” for every third and fourth grade student. The Batch Packs were stuffed with various school supplies. The students were excited and very appreciative over their new gifts. Batch Packs For Kids are given

to students so they have the materials needed to succeed in school. More than 7,500 Batch Packs have been given out since the program has started. Teacher bags were also given with more than \$250 in classroom supplies. Mr. Batch wants to create communities where all kids and families are equipped with tools they need to build their own best futures. Thanks, Charlie!



Charlie Batch poses with Mrs. Brooks' third grade class.

Hutchinson's Annual Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat

Hutchinson Elementary celebrated National Anti-Bullying Month by participating in a Fall Festival. Students rotated through centers which each focused on an anti-bullying strategy. They listened to stories, talked about strategies and feelings, created art projects, and participated in team building exercises. The students really enjoyed participating in these activities and it is a great opportunity to put these anti-bullying strategies to work in hands-on, creative, and fun ways.

This fun-filled educational experience couldn't happen without generous donations



of materials from the families at Hutchinson. A big thank you goes out to them for helping to make this a

possibility! This shows just how caring and special the Hutchinson families are!

Wrapping up our Fall Festival day was our Family Reading Night event. During Family Reading Night, families read Halloween stories,



bobbed for apples, made s'mores, decorated edible scary trees, and played other fun Halloween

games. On top of all that fun, families participated in their favorite part of Family Reading Night... Trunk or Treat! We had an amazing turnout with over 200 of our students attending in the evening. This event gives our students and families an

opportunity to gather together, socialize, meet one another and enjoy the season! During the evening, families had an opportunity to vote for a winner in our Pumpkin Carving Contest. Congratulations to our winner Ethan Misch with his pumpkin "Anger!" We had so many creative entries that it was a close race! The Pumpkin Carving Contest is a favorite of the students and staff because we really enjoy seeing the wonderful job our students do with creating their entries. Thanks again to the families, students, and staff at Hutchinson Elementary for making this event possible!



Career Day 2015

On Wednesday, October 21, 2015, Hutchinson students participated in the school's Career Awareness Day. Prior to this annual event, all students created mini posters which expressed their personal interests and possible career choices. These posters provided a colorful hallway display and gave everyone insight to our students' future plans!

This year, Hutchinson welcomed twenty professionals from our community who shared their jobs and the education required to achieve their chosen professions. The students rotated through the various classrooms throughout the afternoon to listen to the presenters and take part in demonstrations as well. From designers of graphics, hair and florals to a veterinarian, chiropractor and lawyer, each twenty minute session was packed with information and inspiration. We would like to thank all those individuals who rescheduled their day to make time for our students!



Anita Cellurale curls Lorelai Cramer's hair with a flat iron.

Celebrating American Education Week

During the week of November 16th, students and staff members from Hutchinson Elementary School participated in American Education Week. American Education Week is celebrated by numerous school districts across the United States. Each year this annual tradition is enjoyed by many individuals throughout the country. Moreover, students engaged in a variety of activities at Hutchinson. On Monday, various students wore mustaches to school and wrote a brief response to a writing prompt. The writing prompt was titled: "I mustache you, what is your favorite thing about Hutchinson Elementary?" Tie Tuesday permitted the students to wear a crazy or ugly tie while working on the day's assignments. One of the most popular days of

the week was Super Hero Wednesday. Many of the students dressed like their favorite superhero and completed a writing prompt as well. The prompt asked them to discuss why staff members at Hutchinson were like superheroes of the world. In addition to those activities, students were allowed to dress in a wacky way from head to toe on Thursday. The students' creative minds worked at full force on designing their interesting and clever outfits. Rock Star Friday wrapped up the week's activities. A great deal of students dressed like a rock star and completed a final writing prompt. Each student discussed what makes him/her a star student at Hutchinson Elementary. What a fantastic week of fun and excitement!

The Bear ExChange Fundraiser

Throughout the month of November, Hutchinson and Hatfield students have been busy collecting spare change to help fight pediatric cancer. The fundraiser is called, “The Bear ExChange.” Students have the opportunity to possibly win a “Stuff-A-Bear” and ice cream party for their classroom by raising the most money! The fundraiser coincides with the Penn State philanthropy, known as “THON.” This charity benefits pediatric cancer research at Penn State Children’s Hospital in Hershey, PA. Ninety-six percent of every dollar go to help the families pay medical

bills not covered by insurance, as well as fund the research to finding a cure for this terrible disease. “THON” is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world, and has raised over \$127 million. Our local campus, Penn State Fayette, was the first of 19 commonwealth campuses to raise over \$1 million since its inception. Our students have been very excited as they watch their spare change add up in the collection containers! Everyone will find out the winning classrooms before Christmas break. THON ON, LH!



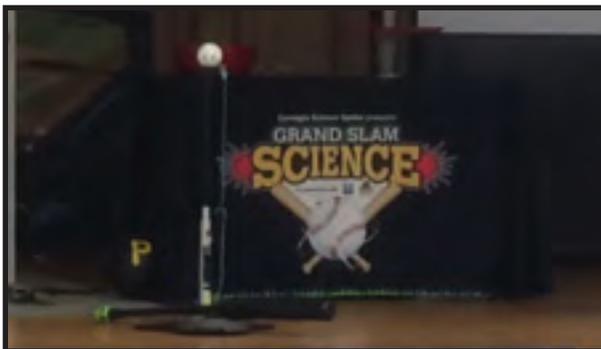


Anti-Bullying Program

As part of the annual anti-bullying kickoff the students at Marshall participated in an assembly and other activities. They heard campfire style tunes to help them to remember how to treat others, how to report issues, and how to be a good friend. The kickoff also featured the

book How Full is Your Bucket? Students listened to the book being read and then they put it into action. Each student created their own bucket. In their homerooms the students wrote at least one nice thing about all of their classmates and added it to their buckets.

Back . . . Back . . . Back . . . It's a Grand Slam!!!



When you combine science and baseball you get, a grand slam in the eyes of many kids. The students in fourth and fifth grade participated in an interactive assembly from the Carnegie Science Center. They learned about physics, gravity, and famous scientists and how they relate to the game of baseball. The students cheered as they watched and anticipated the results of the science experiments taking place in front of them.

Riding In Style

The Limo Lunch is one of the staples of each school year. Students have the opportunity to earn a Limo Lunch with the principal and secretary of the building. Over twenty students earned this incentive and enjoyed Pizza Hut with their peers. The students had to sell at least 15 items to qualify for this event. Some of the students have been going on this trip for all of their years at Marshall. Pictured above are Mrs. Provance and the students on their way to Pizza Hut.



Ready... Set... Math!

The program First in Math is new to the district and has quickly become a student favorite. All students in grade kindergarten through eighth grade are participating in this program at school and at home to try to improve their math skills. There have been 577,959 math problems

solved so far this year by students at Marshall. As students earn at least 500 stickers for solving problems, they will have their name added to the First in Math Wall of Fame in our multi-purpose room. Pictured below are the top five students in each grade level.



Kindergarten – Second Grade

Pictured above from left to Right: Top Row: Logan Jobs, Hannah Core, Abigail Perkins, Holly Piovarchy, Morgan Ferris, Aiden Milsom, Lila Tatar. Bottom Row: Hunter Yauger, Madalyn Bosnic, Ethan Perkins, Faith Gordon, Colby Grimm, Anthony Rivera, Carson Tate, Carter Pitts



Third – Fifth Grade

Pictured above from left to right: top row: Brianna Hensh, Andrew Molyneaux, Joseph Kendro, Latrelle Polk, Jay Thompson, Austin Kopusko, Connor Kalich - Middle Row: Hailie Earley, Parker Clements, Emily Guess, Krew Livingston, Maddox McAllister – Bottom Row: Addison Milsom, Parker Hoff, Ella Hixson

Officer Phil Program

The officer Phil program is a yearly event at all of the elementary schools in Laurel Highlands. Each fall the students learn about being a buddy and not a bully, stranger danger, and other topics to help keep them safe. The students watch magic tricks and learn from puppets how to be good citizens in our community.

