

Volume 13 Issue 20  
February 1, 2010

Learn Today, To Lead Tomorrow

Liberty Common School

Common Knowledge, Common Virtues, Common Sense  
1725 Sharp Point Dr., Ft. Collins, CO 80525, (970) 482-9800

A National Charter School of the Year, A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School,  
A Certified Core Knowledge Visitation Site School,  
A John Irwin School of Excellence

## What is Happening In February

Feb. 4-BOD Expansion Mtg.  
7 p.m.

Feb. 9th-1st and 2nd Grade  
Concert—6:30 p.m.

Feb. 12th— Liberty Teacher  
Idol-2:30-3:00 p.m.

Feb. 15th. President's Day, **NO  
SCHOOL**

## Liberty Common School Board of Directors 2009-2010

Terri Fisher— 223-0989  
Kayleen Fraley-377-8850  
Craig Horton— 207-1454  
Dave Kleen- 377-9579  
Dan Provaznik— 223-0188  
Jeff Webb-545-9636  
Bill Werst— 631-8379

## Board of Directors Expansion Meeting:

Feb. 4, 7 p.m.

## Board of Directors Meeting:

Feb. 18, 7 p.m.

## BOD AGENDA

Financial Review, Colorado  
Legislation Update from Bus.  
Mgr., Preliminary review of  
2010-11, Course/Staffing  
changes (if any), Appoint  
BOD Election Committee

**Deadline for BoxTop  
spring submission is  
Feb. 1st. As always,  
please continue to  
collect Boxtops for  
Education .**

## Headmaster Writing by Russell Spicer

### Perfect Practice

Most of you know that I am a sports enthusiast. I passionately enjoy watching, playing, and coaching numerous sports. I am amazed at how dedicated young athletes are to their sport(s). It is not uncommon to have a child practice his/her sport until he/she has become exhausted. One way to become proficient at a sport is to practice the particular skills of that sport repeatedly. To move onto a higher level in the sport, the fundamental skills must become second nature to the athlete. How do these skills become second nature? Through constant practice and tireless repetition does one perfect skills. The same ideology holds true in the realm of academics.

In his book entitled "Class Warfare: Besieged Schools, Bewildered Parents, Betrayed Kids and the Attack on Excellence," J. Martin Rochester addresses the benefits of practice and repetition in academics. He states, "In the old maxim "no pain, no gain," the new slogan is "if it ain't fun, it can't be done." Why the concept of drill and practice should be so alien to today's educationist remains a mystery. Michael Jordan, Itzhak Perlman, and any number of other highly successful people can speak to the importance of repetitive routines in the development of their skills. The Nobel laureate Herbert Simon and colleagues at Carnegie Mellon University note that science supports what would seem intuitively obvious: "The criticism of practice (called drill and kill) is prominent in constructivist writing. Nothing flies more in the face of the last twenty years of research than the assertion that practice is bad. All evidence, from the laboratory and from extensive case studies of professionals, indicates that real competence only comes with extensive practice."

If we are willing to have our children painstakingly practice music or sports, why should we not be willing to ask the same of them in academics? It should be very plausible to require a student to rewrite an essay or a paper multiple times. It is more than reasonable to expect students to practice reading on a continual basis. Penmanship you ask? Sure, constant detailed practice will produce wonderful results. The same goes for math facts and math homework as well. Just ask Mr. Lovely how he feels about the need for nightly homework. Actually, you could just ask the 8th and 9th grade students how Mr. Lovely feels about giving nightly homework - they would say he is all for it!

Sports, music, dance and other extracurricular activities are wonderful! One can't help but wonder, however, how well children would be performing academically if they approached their education with the same intensity and desire as they do these other extracurricular interests.

## Take An Active Role At Liberty Common School

Liberty Common School Board Elections will be held in April. If you are interested in being a part of our wonderful school, please submit your application by February 24th. Applications are on the Liberty Common website.

## Liberty Common Girls Basketball

Come out and support the Lady Eagles as they take on their opponents. All games begin at **4:00 p.m.**

- Feb. 1** Liberty at HMS  
**Feb. 4** KQA at Liberty  
**Feb. 8** Union Colony at Liberty  
**Feb. 11** Liberty at New Vision  
**Feb. 16** Rez at Liberty  
**Feb. 18** Ridgeview at Liberty

## Kindergarten Store Opening Soon

Mrs. Shockley, one of our fine Kindergarten teachers, is seeking gently or barely used toy treasures to stock her Kindergarten store. Please bring in items to the Front Office and they will be delivered to her classroom. Thank you.



**2009/2010 Yearbooks are still available for \$25.00 until supplies last. Order forms are available in the Front Office.**

## News from the Lunchroom



By now your student should have received a March, April and May Lunch Calendars. **March Calendars are due on Feb. 11th, April Calendars are due on March 11th and May Calendars are due on April 11th.** It is very important that calendars are turned in by these dates. All calendars can also be found on our website.

## Liberty Library Needs Volunteers

Miss Behr needs a parent volunteer in the library on Tuesday mornings from 8:00-10:00 a.m. to help shelve books. Younger siblings are welcome to accompany a parent during this time. If this is something that would work with your schedule, please contact Tina Spicer, at 223-7587 or spicerrt@yahoo.com.

## American Idol Has Nothing on Liberty



Mark your calendars and Blackberrys– for **February 12th** when many of the Liberty Common School staff and teachers take the stage for Liberty Idol. The fun will begin at **2:30 in the Performance Hall.** All talent scouts, parents and students are invited to attend. This fun event is brought to you by Liberty Common School Student Council. Liberty students earned this event by bringing in a record number of canned goods for the Larimer County Food Bank.

## High School Update from Bob Schaffer, Project Manager

### The LCHS House System

By: Bob Schaffer, Project Manager

Here's a question that won't likely appear on next week's CSAP test: If *Domus Scientiae* is to Ravenclaw as *Domus Virtutis* is to Slytherin, what is *Domus Prudentiae*?

At its last meeting, the Liberty Board of Directors adopted a plan for a "House System" to be implemented at Liberty Common High School.

The LCHS House System is a student organizational structure of vertical groupings designed to achieve specific academic and student-life objectives. The system supplants the traditional horizontal divisions of school class, age and grade level by creating smaller integrated communities of students within the school.

The LCHS House System also provides a framework for student governance. One of its goals is to ensure individual attention for each student with at least two adults who will monitor and support the academic, social, moral and behavioral maturity of each LCHS student.

The system also increases institutional and peer-to-peer support for each student. The approach multiplies occasions to build strong, healthy student relationships.

Furthermore, the system more fully develops leadership skills in every student, enhances recruitment of new students and better maintains contact with LCHS graduates.

Here's how it works. LCHS students from all grades are divided into separate groups called "Houses." In our first year, each House contains approximately 25 students. Each house is overseen by a "House Dean."

Each House is expected to organize various school-wide events such as social activities (dances, proms, etc.), competitions, guest lectures, spirit rallies and student projects.

There are various House events planned such as cookouts, service projects, teambuilding activities, outings, tournaments, etc. Additionally, each House develops its own traditions, customs, symbols and crests, a website, awareness of the House's name and its significance to LCS/LCHS history.

Each year, the Houses compete for an award given to the House that accumulates the most points in various competitions that accentuate academic, athletic, leadership, character excellence and virtue. Each quarter, Houses earn points by placing the most students on the Honor Roll, achieving best attendance, least school detentions, best dressed and other extraordinary achievements.

The names of the first three LCHS Houses are stated in Latin: *Domus Scientiae* (House of Knowledge), *Domus Virtutis* (House

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## High School Update Continued From Page 2

of Virtue) and *Domus Prudentiae* (House of Common Sense). These designations correspond to the Liberty motto “Common Knowledge, Common Virtue, Common Sense.”

The House-system concept is not new. It’s been around for over a century.

A tradition of British schools, Houses are common throughout England, Australia and New Zealand. They’re also found in a handful of high-performing secondary schools and universities throughout the world including a growing number in the United States.

Joanne Kathleen Rowling’s exposure to the House System in England might explain why the famous British author fabricated a similar structure into the fabled Hogwarts School of her best-selling *Harry Potter* series. Any similarities, however, end there.

JK Rowling assigned flamboyant names to her houses – Ravenclaw, Slytherin, Hufflepuff and – the answer to our opening question – Gryffindor. Her fictitious houses competed in magical contests of extreme danger and fantastic exploit.

In contrast, the more settled foundation of Liberty’s conventional House System rests squarely upon the academic *terra firma* of our rigorous curriculum, character education and high expectations. It bears some resemblance to the squadron systems of U.S. military academies.

Based upon research considered by the Board of Directors prior to adopting the LCHS House System, we expect the following outcomes: An enhanced school-family environment spanning freshman through senior class divisions; more opportunities for all LCHS students to be trained as leaders through meaningful, hands-on leadership experience; focused support internalizing LCHS character development.

So, when does it all get started? For Liberty’s current 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders – right away!

A detailed description of the LCHS House System can be found by clicking [here](#).

**Smart Kid Question of the Week.** Congratulations to scholar David Heston for correctly answering last week’s Smart-Kid Question (posted on Mr. Schaffer’s office window): **Q:** Who is Xanthippe’s spouse’s best student’s mother’s second spouse? **A:** Pylampes. Xanthippe’s spouse was Socrates. His best student was Plato. Plato’s mother was Perictione. Her second husband (who primarily raised Plato) was Pylampes. Mr. Heston won a blue crystal paperweight globe.

**This week’s question is:** **Q:** Where and when were the first triceratops remains discovered? The first to answer wins a 66-million-year-old piece of a triceratops shield bone found near the same location as the answer.

### Chess Rules at LCS

For nearly six hours on Jan. 23rd the Liberty Common Chess Team played some tough matches against much larger teams in PSD K-8 tournament. Our team of seven Eagles won 3rd place among 23 schools, comprising 126 competitors. The team was awarded a trophy wish will be added to Liberty’s display case. Megan Liu, won 3rd place for 1st Grade, Matthew Liu, won 3rd place for 4th grade



### News from Liberty’s BOD

- On-line parent surveys will be out on Feb. 1st. Please check your email and complete. Your opinions matter!
- The FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE is seeking volunteers! If you have background and/or an interest in fundraising, grant writing or event planning, our committee could use your help. We meet the first Tues. of every month at the school at 6:30 p.m. Even if you are just curious about the needs of the school, we would love to have you join us. Please call Kayleen Fraley with any interest at (970)377-8850. Kayleen or Michelle Povaznik will get you connected in this dynamic opportunity!

and Brayden Lane who won 5th place for 5 grade. Other students who gave excellent efforts for Liberty were Bretta Lichtenwalner, Vedha Vijayasathy, Ryan Saldanha, and Henry Anderson. Contact coach/instructor Ted Anderson ([caribeenoon@gmail.com](mailto:caribeenoon@gmail.com)) for comments or questions about joining the chess team. The final tournament of the year is at CSU in April. The Liberty chess club would like to see some representation from grades 7-9th. Parent and or upper grade student volunteers with some chess knowledge are encouraged to help. The chess team meets from 3:00-4:00 p.m. on Fridays.

Students in above photo, from left to right, **Matthew Liu (4th grade), Megan Liu (1st grade), Henry Anderson (5th grade) and Brayden Lane (5th grade).**



# Jungle Jubilee

February 26, 6pm - 8 pm

## Prepurchase Ticket form

By pre-purchasing your winter carnival tickets, you save money and time.

Prepurchased tickets: 5 for \$1

Tickets at the night of the event: 4 for \$1

Costs of events are as follows:

- Hamburger meal..... 15 tickets  
(includes hamburger, chips & soda pop)
- Hot dog meal..... 15 tickets  
(includes hot dog, chips & soda pop)
- Nacho chips w/ cheese..... 4 tickets
- Soda pop..... 2 tickets
- Chips..... 2 tickets
- Bouncy House..... 4 tickets
- Obstacle course..... 4 tickets
- Games & crafts..... 1 to 4 tickets each



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ included for tickets: \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach your check to this bottom portion of the flyer and return to the Front Office no later than Feb 23rd. Pre-purchased tickets may be picked up at the Jungle Jubilee in the pre-purchased ticket line. Thank you.