



# THE PTSA NEWSLETTER

Langley High School December 2009/January 2010

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### MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Happy winter to all. If the snow keeps to the weekends like it did recently, we get the best of both worlds – beautiful landscapes and time to learn. So, do your snow dances on Fridays only, please. As you read this month's newsletter or browse our website, you will undoubtedly notice several activities taking place which make positive contributions to our community and beyond. These activities are sponsored by faculty, the PTSA, and outside community organizations, but the common group in all are Langley students. In short, your kids are terrific! They have a strong sense of community, honor, empathy, and they have good hearts.

We take great pride in our students not just for these charitable activities but for instilling hope in the future of our nation by bettering themselves in so many ways. First-quarter grades are generally improved, our PSAT and ACT Explore scores are excellent, the hard work of our talented artistic groups has resulted in wonderful performances, our *It's Academic* team won the first television round and will compete again in February, and our winter sports teams look strong and spirited!

I was talking with a parent at the first LHS swim & dive meet about the common misperception that Langley students have no school spirit. This certainly was not evident at the swim meet. We agreed that the cheers and good sportsmanship, as well as the athletic prowess of our swimmers and divers, could compete with any school in the county. Further discussions with others suggest that we don't have a problem with spirit at all, we just have a different kind of school spirit. Sure we look on with envy at other schools' student sections and wish we could party in the stands like them. But our spirit goes a lot deeper than that. Our kids came out to see *Time's Square 2090* and showed extraordinary spirit. The *It's Academic* team was wildly supported by students, parents, and our dance team. I've never seen a school that comes together so enthusiastically for things like Case Day and the aforementioned charitable events. There are a dozen other examples where our students take pride in being Saxons in such a unique way that it is sometimes unrecognizable. I encourage all of you to take a close look and help dispel the no-spirit myth.

Of course, there is always room for improvement. The Student Government Association and administrators are working together to expand school pride and to celebrate it without distracting too much from our primary learning mission. So far the student leaders are experimenting with different pep rally formats, exploring ways to celebrate individual student accomplishments, and getting more students out to a variety of activities. Your ideas are welcome. The best way to make suggestions is through your class parents and class teacher sponsors. Thank you in advance for your

suggestions and support.

I would like to revive last year's call for teacher *Kudos*. I haven't done it yet this year and noticed that it has been sorely missed. So, please email me, [mjragone@fcps.edu](mailto:mjragone@fcps.edu), any compliments you might have for our teachers. Please put the word *Kudos* in the subject line so it will be directed to the right place. The administrators will read the compliments (without names) at the next faculty meeting and the teacher will receive a coupon to Greenberry's or another small gift. Last year your *Kudos* emails were instrumental in maintaining high faculty morale and generated a lot of fun and happiness.

High morale in the teaching profession is becoming a rare commodity. As I have asked before, please continue to be patient with teachers and remember that they are being asked to do more with less. I taught for thirteen years. It was by far the hardest job I have ever had – yes, harder than my current position. There are times when you wish you could find a job in a small cubicle in a large office building and do something that doesn't require taking home reams of paper or having to plan two (sometimes three) ninety-minute presentations every single day. Yet, they don't complain. Of course, if there is an issue, please don't ignore it. I would simply ask that you talk with the teacher before you conclude anything. Administrators are here to help you should you need assistance communicating with teachers. Once again, thank you in advance for your support.

Finally, as we near the winter holidays, please take special care to note where your children are, who they befriend, and generally advise them to be safe. Research proves that families who talk with each other about tough issues, like drug and alcohol abuse or safe driving, lead safer lives. With this attention, I'm sure we will see all our Langley Saxons back safe and sound in 2010. My very best wishes to you and yours for a healthy and happy New Year.

*Matt Ragone, 703-287-2704, [Matt.Ragone@fcps.edu](mailto:Matt.Ragone@fcps.edu)*

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### **MESSAGE FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS**

Along with the snow comes the beginning of our winter sports season. Grab a friend and come support our many athletic teams.

December is a busy month for our fine and performing arts programs. We began with a band concert on December 3, an orchestra concert on December 8, and the annual Madrigal Feaste on the 11th and 12th. We finish up with the choral winter concert on the 17th. It is an enjoyable and uplifting experience to hear a performance by one of our talented musical groups.

Many thanks to Jamie Kody and Carolyn Bremer, who worked closely with the administration to facilitate the Touching Bases conference day. Along with a host of parent volunteers, they also served a delicious breakfast for the teachers and administrators that morning. Thanks to everyone who filled out the surveys. The information will be helpful in planning the February conferences.

Thanks also to Laura Mendelsohn and Alexandra Bechter for their hard work on the Teacher of the Year and the Reflections program, respectively. Congratulations to Langley's Teacher of the Year, Brigitte Lavey, and to all the students who submitted creative works for the Reflections program.

As information becomes available about the FCPS budget deficit and the possible effects on our community, we will do our best to keep you informed about how parents can best support our schools. In the meantime, you can review relevant materials and find meeting dates on the FCPS website at <http://www.fcps.edu/news/fy2011.htm>.

Our next PTSA meeting will be Wednesday, January 6, 9:30 am in the PTSA conference center. Please join us!

Warm holiday wishes go out to all Langley families. Thank you for your continued support of the PTSA.

The last day of school before winter break is Wed, Dec 23. Please note that school begins at 7:20 am and dismissal is at 12:10 pm.

*"No self-respecting mother would run out of intimidations on the eve of a major holiday."~Erma Bombeck*

*Andrea Sotter, 703-356-2488, [andrea4@cox.net](mailto:andrea4@cox.net)*

*Stacey Wood, 703-757-4412, [woodsgf@aol.com](mailto:woodsgf@aol.com)*

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# PTSA Committees

We have 20 committed moms who spend one day a month photocopying for teachers! I just wanted to give a shout out to them. This is something the teachers appreciate, but is very much a behind-the-scenes activity! Thanks everyone - Nancy Keefe

## CURRICULUM AND EDUCATION

We would like to thank everyone who completed the survey distributed during Touching Bases last month. The main goal of the survey was to determine if the new parent-teacher conference format was an improvement over the old system and what enhancements could be made. We received valuable input which we have compiled and forwarded to the administration. It was overwhelmingly apparent that the majority of parents prefer the new format. You indicated that you were able to meet with most everyone you wanted to in a timely manner and were able to gather valuable input about your students. By incorporating your suggestions we hope that the waiting time in the longer lines is reduced during future Touching Bases and that progress reports are sent out more frequently for the remainder of the year. These were the two most often cited requests in your survey responses.

The next committee meeting is Tue, Jan 19, 9:15 am in the PTSA conference trailer. All are welcome to attend.

*Jamie Kody, [kody@tidalwave.net](mailto:kody@tidalwave.net)  
Carolyn Bremer, [carolynb894@gmail.com](mailto:carolynb894@gmail.com)*

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## FAMILY NETWORK

This year, the committee is focusing on the results of the Fairfax County Youth Survey that was conducted in the fall of 2008. A representative of Fairfax County has presented the survey results at a class coffee this fall for each of the four classes. As you should know by now, 61% of responding seniors at LHS report drinking alcohol within the 30 days prior to the survey; 27% report smoking marijuana; and perhaps most alarming, 39% report binge drinking within the two weeks prior to the survey (binge drinking is defined as 5 or more drinks within one sitting—our kids refer to it as “pre-gaming”).

In response to these statistics, the committee will present several programs to aid parents in understanding teen behavior and the long-term effects of teen drug and alcohol use on the brain and development.

Our first program will be Thu, Jan 14, 9:30-10:45 am in the cafeteria. Neuropsychologist Dr. William Stixrud will speak on the enormous developmental and biological changes that take place in the teenage brain, and how parents can help teens develop patterns for healthy sleep, study, eating and stress management. This promises to be a very compelling program. He spoke last year at McLean HS and parents who attended said it was fabulous.

The second program will be Wed, March 10, 9-10:30 am in the auditorium. Ashley El-Zein, Injury Prevention Coordinator for the INOVA Regional Trauma Center, will speak. Ms. El-Zein will discuss the long-term effects of teen drinking and drug use.

Finally, mark your calendars for the Safe Community Coalition’s Community Conversation on March 24, 7 pm at the McLean Community Center. The Fairfax County Youth Survey results will be presented. Parents will attend break-out groups by school level to share concerns, strategies, etc. This forum will provide parents an opportunity to share successful strategies with each other.

If you have any questions about these programs or the Youth Survey, please contact me.

*Betsy Shomaker, [shomaker.jb@verizon.net](mailto:shomaker.jb@verizon.net)*

## HOSPITALITY

We would like to thank all the parent volunteers who provided delicious salads and desserts at last month’s faculty *Mexican Fiesta* luncheon. Everything was delicious.

The committee and parent volunteers will host a Chinese luncheon on Fri, Feb 19, 10:30 am-1:15 pm for our faculty and staff. Parent donations of bite-sized desserts are tremendously appreciated. To donate, contact Michelle Dymont Fanning, [thedymonts@aol.com](mailto:thedymonts@aol.com). The PTSA really appreciates its outstanding faculty and staff.

## LANDSCAPE

This year's grounds clean-up event was a huge success, thanks to more than 50 student and parent volunteers, the Langley ECO club, Cooper civics students and people from the community who stopped by to help. It was incredible! We had an ambitious agenda of mulching, pruning, hauling brush and removing litter...ALL of which was accomplished. One of the most important jobs was pruning back more than a dozen 20'-high holly trees in the courtyard that had become diseased because of overcrowding. Volunteers manned chainsaws and hauled lumber and brush out of the courtyard for 3 hours! We are deeply appreciative of our many helpers who spent half their day in service to Langley. They include Kevin Green, Jordan Lopez, Calvin Tang, Sathish Nachiaffan, Alexandra Wojcicki, Bianca Beran, Emily Lowman, Rebecca Cramer, Alex Park, Will Park, Alex Lanp, Morgan Long, Dan Mahoney, Ellen Johnson, Elaine Varner, Bill Woodford, Paul Shafernich, Mark Shafernich, Michele Sambiase, Sydney Orshanski, Deanna Belli, Cristina Belli, Liam Carter Condon, Cynthia Drasbak, Cathy Jones, Armin Ahmadi, Yasha Jaraha, Peitro Keuter, Sheeva Doshireh, Beth Muller, Christina Muller, Emily Olmstead, Ali Fahimi, Taylor Olcott, Elaine Tholen, Mitchell Kiffe, Donna Kiffe, Chip Comstock, H.C. Park, Kathleen Welch, Ava Shomaker, Chris Berkley, Dale Berkley, Lala Johnson and Maxwell McKee. We also would like to extend a special thanks to Lala Johnson, who has had children AND grandchildren graduate from Langley and is responsible for planting many of the beautiful gardens we all now tend and enjoy. She still comes to work and puts in more time and effort than everyone else combined!

*Donna Kiffe  
Chris Berkley*

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

The PTSA along with the teachers and administrators would like to thank our generous community for the tremendous response we have had for the Professional Development Fund. We have processed applications from many LHS teachers. If you have not had an opportunity to contribute to this important fund, there is still time, please consider doing so. All contributions are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated. Please send contributions to LHS PTSA - PDF, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA 22101. Please make checks payable to LHS PTSA with PDF on the memo line.

The following teachers have received disbursements since our last announcement:

Kelly Mulligan - Trinity College Courses for Va State Licensure  
Deirdre Forgione - Va Art Education Assoc. Annual Conference  
Mac Lambert - Va Music Educators Assoc. Annual Conference

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following parents for their generous contributions: Mark & Karin Anderson; Deborah Yoon; Clint & Barb Bennett; Karen McSteen.

*Leslie Anderson, 703-757-6601, lkaleslie@aol.com  
Insun Hofgard, 703-759-7877, jhofgard@aol.com*

## REFLECTIONS

The PTSA is pleased to announce the Langley results of the 2009-2010 Reflections program "Beauty Is ..." All entries that received the Outstanding Interpretation Award have been forwarded to the next judging level. We will keep you informed of those results. We congratulate the following students:

### Literature

Mary Fouse – Outstanding Interpretation  
Daisy Horning – Award of Excellence  
Lara Bigotti – Award of Merit

### Music Composition \* (Michael J. Greenway Award)

Rachel Ann Stone – Outstanding Interpretation  
Paul Zche-Chung Li – Award of Excellence

### Photography

Michele Anderson – Outstanding Interpretation  
Elizabeth Quinn – Outstanding Interpretation  
Ava Mohebbi – Award of Excellence  
Maryam Sedaghatpour – Award of Merit

## Visual Arts

Lamvy Le – Outstanding Interpretation  
Rebecca Chung – Award of Excellence  
Elizabeth Lim – Award of Merit

## Dance Choreography

Aimee Anne Cho – Outstanding Interpretation

Our special thank you goes out to the judges who have participated in this year's program:

Literature: Christina Daub co-founded and co-edited *The Plum Review*, an award-winning national poetry journal, and co-founded and co-directs The Plum Writers Retreat, an annual poetry conference. Her work has appeared most recently in *Fulcrum* and the anthology *180 More: Extraordinary Poems for Every Day* edited by former Poet Laureate Billy Collins. She has written for National Geographic Channels, Discovery, *Potomac Life* and other publications. She teaches at the Writer's Center in Bethesda, and in the Maryland Poet-in-the-Schools and Virginia's Pick a Poet programs as well. She earned her MFA in Poetry from the University of Maryland and received a Young American Poet's Award in 1991.

Music Composition: Muriel Von Villas studied opera and voice at the Boston Conservatory of Music where she was a Fellow under John Moriarty and in opera production at New England Conservatory. For 11 years she studied voice and vocal pedagogy with Todd Duncan and her directing teachers include Wesley Balk, John Moriarty, Boris Goldovsky and David Bartholomew. From 2002-2006, Ms. Von Villas was the dramatic vocal coach for the Washington National Opera Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists Program. She is a member of the voice faculty at George Washington University. She has taught voice and staged operas internationally, including a round-the-world tour in 1995 where she directed *Rigoletto* in Colombo, Sri Lanka and *Gianni Schicchi* in Taipei, Taiwan. While in Taipei, she also coached singers and taught an intensive five-week opera performance class at the Academy of Vocal Arts. Ms. Von Villas resides in Falls Church, Virginia, with her husband and four children, where she teaches and coaches singers.

Photography and Visual Arts: Ronni Jolles, an artist known for innovation, has introduced a new art form. Paper – in its many colors and textures – is the essence of Jolles's work. The technique could be called collage or mixed media, but in fact, it is something quite different. In a language distinct from painting, Jolles uses paper as a painter creates with paint. The many different papers have been gathered from all over the world including such places as Nepal, Japan, Egypt, Thailand, Italy, Mexico, India, and Tibet. Born in Rochester, New York, Jolles graduated from Cornell University and has received artistic training from the Corcoran School of Art, The Almalfi Music & Arts Program, the Art League School, and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. When discovering this new art form, Jolles had no idea that the medium of paper would, or could, lead to such a revolutionary art form.

Dance Choreography: Amy Cuppett Stiverson is Artistic & Business Director of the Cuppett Performing Arts Center in Vienna, VA. She studied with the Cuppett School of Dance under Alzine Cuppett, Founder & Artistic Director Emeritus, and also with the Washington Ballet School, and attended the Teacher's Training School at Kent State University. Amy earned a BS degree in Finance from ODU in 1992 and enjoyed a successful career in Mortgage Banking and Real Estate. Feeling pulled back to her art, she took her business skills and began managing & promoting the Center in the late 90's. Utilizing her artistic side, Amy's award-winning choreography can be seen on the Cuppett Dance Company for which she directs. Amy has served as a Master Teacher for Dance Masters of America Student/Teacher Workshops, and was recognized as a Virginia Governor's School Outstanding Educator in 2004. She is an associate member of the Cecchetti Council of America. Above all, she is the proud mother of four beautiful children.

Alexandra Bechter, [cfs234@gmail.com](mailto:cfs234@gmail.com), 703-992 9612

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## TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Brigette Lavey for being selected Langley's Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Lavey has been teaching at Langley for 35 years as part of the Social Studies department. We received nominations from parents, students and teachers; the whole community participated. Many nominators said that she was the "best teacher they ever had." Thank you to everyone who sent in nominations. Mr. Ragone honored all of the nominees during their staff meeting in November.

Representing Langley, Mrs. Lavey will go on as a nominee for the prestigious FCPS Teacher of Year Award. Following that, all the nominees for VA, MD and DC public and private schools will compete for the Washington

Post's Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award for 2010. Best wishes to Mrs. Lavey on this well-deserved award. We hope that she continues to the top. Of course, she is tops in our book! Thanks to all the teachers of Langley for the wonderful job they do day-in and day-out. They are all outstanding teachers.

## **Class News**

### **CLASS OF 2013 (Freshmen)**

The last day of school before winter break is Wed, Dec 23. Please note that school begins at 7:20 am and dismissal is at 12:10 pm.

*Freshman Class Parents*

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### **CLASS OF 2012 (Sophomores)**

December is another busy month with festive holiday concerts by Langley's band, orchestra and choral groups. Please check the calendar on the Langley website for the dates and times of these wonderful concerts.

Sophomore parents should plan to attend the parent driving information program on Jan 12, 7:00 pm in the Auditorium. Ms. Cheryl Buffo, driver's education teacher, will talk about both classroom and behind-the-wheel driving instruction. She will be joined by a police officer, who will talk about restrictions on teenage drivers, and insurance company representatives, who will explain when and how to properly insure your teenage driver.

Winter break starts with an early dismissal on Wed, Dec 23. School will open at 7:20 am that day and students will be dismissed at 12:10 pm.

Our next class coffee will be Mon, Feb 8. There will be an overview of course selection for junior year, including AP courses available to juniors, and a discussion of the SAT, including test preparation, timing and SAT 2s (SAT subject tests).

The Class of 2012 has set up a Facebook account so that class officers can communicate with and survey sophomores on pertinent issues. Currently there is a one-question survey posted in which sophomores are asked their preference for an upcoming all-school event that will be hosted by the Class of 2012. If your sophomore has not already weighed in on this survey, please encourage him or her to do so! Find the survey under "Langley Class of 2012" on Facebook.

To keep up with all of the activities at Langley, check the calendar on the school website [www.fcps.edu/LangleyHS](http://www.fcps.edu/LangleyHS) and the PTSA website [www.langleypsa.org](http://www.langleypsa.org). Keep sharing your photos and videos of the Class of 2012 with the special moments committee by emailing them to [Photos2012@gmail.com](mailto:Photos2012@gmail.com).

Please contact us with any questions, concerns, or suggestions, and thank you for your involvement. Best wishes to all for a restful and happy holiday break!

*Sophomore Class Parents*

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### **CLASS OF 2011 (Juniors)**

We are beginning to plan the Junior-Senior Prom. Get involved! There will be a meeting for anyone interested in helping on Wed, Dec 16, 10 am, in the principal's conference room. The Prom will be Sat, May 22 at Westwood Country Club.

Junior College Night will be Wed, Jan 6, 7 pm. The counselors will talk to the parents of juniors about the college application process.

Informational sessions on the college process will be held during Saxon Time the week of Jan 4 for students. They are optional, but it is very important for the kids to attend. The more information our kids have, the easier and more relaxed the process will be!

AP Information Night will be Wed, Jan 13, 7 pm. This is a great way to help your child decide which AP classes to take next year. Both students and parents are invited. Come talk with the teachers and get an idea of what topics will be covered in each class and what workload to expect.

Our rising seniors will be meeting with their counselors and choosing their classes between Feb 2 and 19.

The family network committee will present a program on the teenage brain on Thu, Jan 14, 9:30 am, in the cafeteria. Dr. William Stixrud will talk about stress, sleep, eating, study and teenagers.

The next principal's coffee will be Wed, Jan 27, 9:15 am in the auditorium.

Our next class coffee will be Fri, Feb 12, 9:30 am. Betty Schneider from the Career Center will speak.

Take some time and check the results of the latest Fairfax County Youth Survey. One of the most disturbing results is that *Langley HS has the highest self-reported alcohol use among all high schools in Fairfax County*. The survey can be found at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov) under *demographics and data*.

*Junior Class Parents*

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### **CLASS OF 2010 (Seniors)**

Seniors will continue to receive a monthly treat on the first Friday of the month during the last 15 minutes of Saxon Time. They were served an assortment of Krispy Kremes on Dec 4. These dates are published on the rolling announcements on the flat screen TVs as well as the audio system but we could use your help reminding them too. Next one is Jan 8.

Please purchase your tickets for the Jan 24 *Capitol Steps* performance. This is the primary fundraiser for the ANGP. Contact Lisa Walsh, [lisawalsh@mindspring.com](mailto:lisawalsh@mindspring.com), or Joanna Ehat, [jgehat@cox.net](mailto:jgehat@cox.net), for more information. Rumor has it that the government teachers are considering extra credit for students who attend.

Our annual Battle of the Bands is scheduled for Feb 6 at the Old Firehouse Teen Center in McLean. Contact [christopher.rademacher@fcps.edu](mailto:christopher.rademacher@fcps.edu) for more information.

Please join us at our next class coffee on Feb 9, 9:30-11 am, in the auditorium. Contact Teresa Hyatt, [TCH\\_design@yahoo.com](mailto:TCH_design@yahoo.com), if you can help with hospitality. The agenda will be announced by class email so please get enrolled by contacting [langley2010@gmail.com](mailto:langley2010@gmail.com) with "enroll me" in the subject line.

We will continue collecting student photos that have been taken at Langley or Langley-sponsored events for the end-of-year show. Label each photo with your child's name and year, ie John Smith, freshman year. If you have questions, contact Mollie Vardell, 571-220-8678 or [molliev@verizon.net](mailto:molliev@verizon.net).

As our seniors complete the last of their college applications, we want to thank all of the counselors and teachers who have guided them, and us! Enjoy a relaxing winter break and the lull between applications and acceptances. Hoping that all our seniors receive their holiday wishes!

*Senior Class Parents*

### **SENIOR ETHICS FORUM**

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of Gannett/USA Today, the Senior Ethics Forum will be held at Gannett headquarters in McLean on Thu, April 15. The Class of 2010, Langley PTSA, and Safe Community Coalition join Gannett in sponsoring this event in which all seniors participate.

Seniors rotate through each of four modules where an ethical dilemma is presented, followed by small group discussions facilitated by adult volunteers. We need table leaders to work with groups of 8 students. Senior parents, teachers and school staff do not serve in this capacity, so we need parents of underclassmen to serve in slots not filled by volunteers from the local business/professional community. Time commitment includes a brief evening training session on Tue, April 6 in addition to the forum at Gannett on April 15, 8 am-2 pm. Please contact Susan Mayman, [smayman@verizon.net](mailto:smayman@verizon.net), if you are willing to volunteer.

Feedback from the past six senior classes has been overwhelmingly positive, and their constructive suggestions are incorporated to keep the modules focused on relevant issues.

Thank you for supporting this program!

*Susan Mayman and Janet Wright-Simpson*

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## ALL NIGHT GRAD PARTY



We hope you like the new All Night Grad Party logo! Ticket and registration forms for the party are available on the PTSA website [www.langleyptsa.org](http://www.langleyptsa.org) at the ANGP tab. An ANGP ticket would make the perfect stocking stuffer. Our goal is 100% participation. The committee is looking for both donations and volunteers to support this safe, fun, alcohol-free graduation evening. If you think you might like to join one of our many committees, please contact Susan Mayman, the volunteer coordinator, [smayman@verizon.com](mailto:smayman@verizon.com). All of the committees and chairs are listed on the PTSA website.

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## Counseling Connection

### COURSE REGISTRATION

Counselors will meet with students by grade level and provide an overview of what courses are available and which ones are suggested. Students will receive a Course Offering Booklet to share with their parents. Parents and students need to review this information in order to make realistic choices. Students will meet individually with their counselors in February and March starting with rising seniors, then rising juniors, and finally rising sophomores. During the meeting, counselors will review with the students what courses are appropriate based on the student's present grades, attendance, prior SOL scores, and future expectations. If a counselor writes that a course is not suggested, it is important to view this as the educational specialist seeing the larger picture. We see too many students over-extending by attempting AP courses as a way to raise their GPA. This seldom works. A student in a regular level class with a "B" may actually receive a lower grade in an AP course because of the increased rigor of the course. Look at your student's work habits, extra-curricular activities, love of reading, grades this year and the time spent on the computer interacting with friends. This will probably be the same for next year with a little maturity thrown in. Students mature at different rates; as they transition from concrete thinking to abstract thinking and develop their organizational skills, they are more able to handle challenging courses.

### SOPHOMORE CLASS COLLEGE INFORMATION

In December the Student Services department offers programs to introduce sophomores and their parents to the college process. On Dec 9, Randy Doss, Vice President for Enrollment Services at Guilford College, presented an introduction to the college process for sophomore parents. During Saxon Time Dec 14, 15 & 17 counselors will work with sophomore students to introduce them to planning for college. There will be sessions on understanding the college process, an introduction to the Family Connections online program, and a question & answer session with current seniors.

### JUNIOR CLASS COLLEGE INFORMATION

Junior Parent College Night will be Wed, Jan 6, 7 pm. We will start in the auditorium and divide into various interest sessions. We will provide information for "new-to-the-college process" parents as well as "second-time-through" parents.

During the week of January 4-8 during Saxon Time, counselors will host sessions on the college process in the auditorium. The sessions are:

Mon, Jan 4	The College Search and Visit
Tue, Jan 5	The College Application and Essay
Thu, Jan 6	Standardized Testing
Fri, Jan 7	A Senior Panel Discussion

We hope that junior students will be able to attend all of the sessions. Copies of the Junior Handbook will be available on Blackboard after Jan 8.

### AP NIGHT

This program will be Wed, Jan 13, 7 pm. All students should attend either AP Night or an AP session. Taking an AP course is a large commitment of time. It is important to be realistic when estimating how much time each course and extra-curricular activity will require. For seniors, college applications will also require substantial time and effort. Plan accordingly. It is better to do well on one AP course or none, than to overextend and possibly lower the GPA.

### SENIOR MID-YEAR REPORTS

Senior mid-year reports will be mailed in early February to all colleges to which a student has applied. The end of the semester is not until Jan 28 and the county cannot process the mid-year reports before early February. This mailing is done automatically and without charge. The county computes each student's GPA and this process does not begin until semester grades are received. Some colleges ask for the grades by mid-January, but our semester does not end until late January. **CAUTION: Remind your senior(s) to hand in all class work by the due dates. We cannot process transcripts with incomplete grades. Late work will probably cause an incorrect, usually lower GPA.**

### COLLEGE TRANSCRIPT PACKAGES

Our counselors are working at home on nights and weekends to make sure that all transcript packages are complete and on time. Please adhere to our deadlines as there are too many transcript packages to allow each student a different timeline. The counselors, Ms. Gratz and Ms. Schneider have done a fantastic job meeting with seniors, writing counselor letters, completing secondary report forms, processing packets and making sure everything is mailed ON TIME.

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## Performing Arts

**CHORAL:** Come enjoy the sounds of the season at the winter choral concert on Thu, Dec 17, 7:30 pm in the auditorium. All of the Langley choirs will perform selections in this concert.

**ORCHESTRA:** Six Langley orchestra students were selected for the Senior Regional Orchestra, with two of the musicians earning chairs within the top ten of their section. The Senior Regional musicians are violin: Kimiya Haghighi and Marisa Konishi; viola: Daniel Leigh (8th chair); cello: Evan Passante (4<sup>th</sup> chair) and Devin Yee; and harp: Hyoju (Bianca) Lee.

Fourteen Langley orchestra students were selected for the Senior District Orchestra. The District Orchestra musicians are violin: Michelle Chu (concertmaster), Huruka Konishi, Daphne Na, Debbie Pan, Brendon Tran, Anat Gilboa, Cindy Lee, Yeon Jae Lim, Jonathan Park; viola: Audrey McNicholas; and cello: Jack Parker (assistant principal), Constance Chu, Alex Swann, and Skye Toor.

The Chamber Ensemble will perform for the Superintendent's Advisory Committee at Virginia Hospital Center, a corporate reception, and at the Canadian Embassy's Christmas party.

Please hurry if you want to obtain one of the White House ornaments (\$20) in time for the holidays. Contact Wendy Hunter, 703-759-1658 or [wendyshunter@cox.net](mailto:wendyshunter@cox.net).

It is not too late to sign up for the orchestra's trip to Orlando, Florida, which takes place April 22-25. More than 80 students have signed up already, and we have room for more orchestra students and chaperones. Forms are available at the orchestra website [www.langleyorchestra.org](http://www.langleyorchestra.org). Questions should be sent to [michelle.claude@fcps.edu](mailto:michelle.claude@fcps.edu) and/or [Tina\\_Kao@yahoo.com](mailto:Tina_Kao@yahoo.com).

**THEATRE:** To the Langley community-at-large, THANK YOU!! On behalf of Theatre Arts Chair Phyliss Jaffe; playwright and composer Wes Brandt; cast, crew, and band; and Saxon Stage On Cue (SSOC), we gratefully acknowledge your support for *Time's Square 2090*, our original fall musical.

*Time's Square 2090* enjoyed:

-Record-breaking ticket sales and attendance all three performance nights!!

-Media coverage by *The Washington Post*, the Connection newspapers, *Sun Gazette*, WUSA Channel 9. Even "Fox and Friends" inquired about *TS 2090* and interviewed Wes.  
-Outstanding critical acclaim by National Capital Area Cappies critics. Visit [www.saxonstage.com](http://www.saxonstage.com) to read reviews.  
-Critic's Choice recognition for directing, performances, and behind-the-scenes contributions by Cappies voters. Visit <http://www.cappies.com/shared/choices-listcat.php?year=2010&region=NCA&all=1> to learn more.  
-Robust CD and DVD sales  
THANK YOU students, parents, friends, faculty and administrators for making this original production a performing arts phenomenon!!

On Dec 2, fifty drama students descended on NYC. Their jam-packed itinerary included tours of the Juilliard School at Lincoln Center and the Radio City Music Hall Stage Door experience. After a matinee performance of *Superior Donuts*, the new comedy-drama from the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *August: Osage County*, students received an impromptu private back stage tour. At *A Little Night Music*, the Broadway revival of Stephen Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler's Tony Award-winning masterpiece, students met Catherine Zeta-Jones at the stage door!! Thanks to Susan Stewart, SSOC NY trip coordinator, and chaperones Anna Cohen, Sandy LeCompte, Susan Murphy, Susan Shifflett and Mary Knight. Everyone had a great day!!

The Saxon Stage Cappies critics team continues to garner success. Members whose reviews have been selected for publication include Janie Yurechko, Emily Mannon, Tess Higgins, Lauren Stewart, Brian Patterson and Becca Allen. Congratulations!!

Please visit our new website [www.saxonstage.com](http://www.saxonstage.com). Thanks to webmaster Tim Higgins!! Visit our "Frequently asked Questions" section, peruse our photo gallery of past productions, learn more about Saxon Stage, and keep up-to-date with the latest news and information.

The interest meeting for the spring play is Mon, Jan 4, 2:30 pm in the auditorium. Auditions and callbacks are Jan 5 – 8. Rehearsals begin Jan 11.

Saxon Stage On Cue continues to work behind the scenes to support LHS theatre arts. Our next parent meeting is Tue, Dec 15, 6 pm. Contact Una Higgins, President, [una@cox.net](mailto:una@cox.net), for more information.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

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## Winter Sports

**BOYS BASKETBALL:** The team opened the season in the Langley Tip-Off tournament, hosting Battlefield and Westfield Dec 4-5. Langley hosted Robinson on Dec 8 in non-district action. Cross town rival McLean comes to Langley Fri, Dec 18. Six seniors return from last year's District Championship team. They are Abe Yi, John Monroe, Joey Kiffe, Austin Kriz, Colin Jones and Chris Welby. Best of luck to the Saxons as they look to win three straight Liberty District Championships.

**GIRLS BASKETBALL:** We are very excited about the season! We had over 60 candidates trying out for the three teams! There are 22 freshmen and five seniors in our program. We hope everyone comes out to support us at as many games as possible. Please visit [Langleysports.org](http://Langleysports.org) for more information. Our freshman team, coached by Ken Savittiere, played very well in two scrimmages and has fifteen players. The JV team, coached by Keith Eastman, has thirteen players and had one competitive pre-season scrimmage. The varsity team, coached by Tim Anderson, has ten players: five seniors, three juniors, and two freshmen. Our captains are Alexis Doherty and Kristen Kody. The varsity assistant coaches are Dominic Manuel, Nora Darcher, and Tom Kody.

We play McLean on Dec 17, 5:45 (freshmen) and 7:00 (JV). On Dec 18, varsity plays McLean at 5:45 pm, before the boys varsity game!

**CREW:** We had a wonderful turnout for winter training. More than 50 rowers and coxswains meet Monday through Thursday in the Science hall. It is not too late to join the team. Stop by one of the training sessions to meet Coach Fanny. For more information check the new crew website [www.teampages.langleycrew.com](http://www.teampages.langleycrew.com).

There will be a swim test at Spring Hill RECenter on Sat, Jan 9, 5 pm. All freshman and novice team members must pass the test to be on the team. There will be a crew orientation for parents and athletes on Wed, Jan 20,

7:30 pm in the cafeteria. The Mid-Atlantic Erg Sprints competition will be Sat, Jan 30 at TC Williams, Alexandria. The Saxon/Spartan Ergathon Face-Off is in early February. This is a key fundraiser for our team. For more information about any of these events, please email [langleycrew@saxoncrew.com](mailto:langleycrew@saxoncrew.com).

**DANCE:** The team is hard at work preparing for the double-header girls and boys McLean basketball games on Dec 18. We have two new exciting routines to debut that you won't want to miss! In addition to preparing for the basketball season, the dancers have been practicing up to four times a week preparing for the competition season. We hope to see you at our next competition on Sun, Jan 10 at American University in Washington, DC.

**GYMNASTICS:** The team is back in action! Senior captains Jordan Kaihara, Alice Ryland, and Allison Volpicelli will provide strong leadership. There is one home meet on Wed, Dec 16, 6:30 pm, when the seniors will be honored. Please come out and support the team! Coach Allison is back with two new assistants, Coach Missy Cornish and Coach Paige Anderson. Good luck girls and have a great season!

**SWIM & DIVE:** The boys and girls teams began the season Dec 4 with both teams defeating South Lakes. The following night, both boys and girls were defeated by Madison. The swimmers and divers hope to add more victories to their dual-meet record when they face Fairfax, Dec 11 at Spring Hill RECenter and Marshall, Dec 18 at Audrey Moore RECenter. After winter vacation, the Saxons face Stone Bridge Jan 8, McLean Jan 15, and TJ Jan 22 for our final dual meet before District Championships, scheduled for Jan 29-30. Please support your Saxon swimmers and divers and visit the team website at [www.langleysports.org](http://www.langleysports.org) for all related information and results.

**WRESTLING:** The team begins the season defending nine straight Liberty District titles. The Saxons return several strong wrestlers as well as some new, up-and-coming faces for this season. Senior and State placer Anthony Kotoriy leads the way along with other seniors Danial Hozik, Will Wilson, James David Drasbek and Aaron Sahm. The Saxons started competition on Dec 3-5 at Eastside High School in Greenville, SC. The first and only home event will be Wed, Jan 20, 7:30 pm against Stone Bridge.

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## Langley Activities Office

A *This Week in Athletics* Keep In Touch message is sent out on Sunday evenings/Monday mornings with the upcoming week's sports schedules. Come and support your school! Go Saxons! Visit [www.langleysports.org](http://www.langleysports.org) for the complete winter schedule and other information. Hotline 703-827-6064.

If you're planning to try out for a spring sport, please make sure that your VHSL physical form is turned in **before** tryouts begin on Feb 22. Turn the physical form in to the Activities office early. Forms must be reviewed and your name must be included on the "VHSL Eligibility list" which is sent to the coaches on Feb 19. If the form is not complete you will **not** be able to try out until it is completed.

Helpful notes:

- Your physical has to be after May 1, 2009
- Athlete & parent signatures are required on the VHSL form
- Part III has to be completed and signed by the doctor
- Insurance information has to be completed
- Make a copy for your records
- VHSL forms are available under "Files & Links" at [www.langleysports.org](http://www.langleysports.org)
- Questions: Call 703-287-2750

**February Newsletter deadline:**

**Tuesday, January 19**

*To cover dates 1/25/10 through 3/1/10*

*Editors:*

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*Newsletter Calendar:*

*Mary Ann Kennedy, 703-442-0299, [Rose.ken@verizon.net](mailto:Rose.ken@verizon.net)*



**Special Performance! Special Price! Great Cause!**

**The Hilarious Capitol Steps  
come to Langley High School  
January 24th, 7pm**



**Tickets only \$30** (DC performances are \$40/ticket)

**Tickets make a wonderful holiday gift—buy a bundle today  
and make your holiday shopping easy!**

**Don't drive all the way downtown to see this masterful  
comedy troupe! Come to Langley and support  
the Class of 2010's All Night Graduation Party!**

To order tickets: Download flyer from Langley ptsa website ([www.langleyptsa.org](http://www.langleyptsa.org))  
or contact: Mollie Vardell: [molliev@verizon.net](mailto:molliev@verizon.net) or Andrea Sotter: [andrea4@cox.net](mailto:andrea4@cox.net)

## Calendar for Langley PTSA & Activities, 12/14/09 – 2/11/10

### December 2009

14 Mon **Freshman class field trip**  
 15 Tue **Saxon Stage Scenes**, 2:30 pm  
 16 Wed **ANGP committee meeting**,  
 9:30 – 11:00 am, PTSA  
 conference center  
 17 Thu **Choral winter concert**, 7:30 pm,  
 Auditorium  
 23 Wed **Regular opening at 7:20 am**  
**Early dismissal at 12:10 pm**  
 24 Thu **Begin winter vacation through**  
**1/1/10**

### January 2010

1 Fri **New Year's Day holiday**  
 4 Mon **School resumes**  
**Spring play interest meeting**,  
 2:30 pm, Auditorium  
 5 Tue **Spring play auditions and**  
**callbacks** (through 8 Fri)  
 6 Wed **PTSA executive board meeting**,  
 9:30 am, PTSA conf. center  
**Junior class college guidance**  
**night**, 7:00 pm, Auditorium and  
 Cafeteria (snow date 7 Thu)  
 12 Tue **Sophomore parents of teen**  
**drivers information night**, 7:00  
 pm, Auditorium  
 13 Wed **AP information night**, 7:00 pm,  
 Auditorium (snow date  
 Thu 28 Jan)  
 14 Thu **Family Network program on**  
**the Teenage Brain**, 9:30 am -  
 10:45 am, Cafeteria  
**Bands concert workshop**, 2:30  
 – 8:00 pm (also 15 Fri),  
 Auditorium  
 16 Sat **Bands concert workshop**, 9:00  
 am – 1:00 pm, Auditorium  
 18 Mon **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**  
**holiday – no school**  
 19 Tue **Curriculum and Education**  
**committee meeting**, 9:15 am,  
 PTSA conference center  
**Newsletter deadline**, 3:00 pm

20 Wed **Crew orientation for parents**  
**and athletes**, 7:30 pm, Cafeteria  
 23 Sat **SAT** (not at LHS)  
 24 Sun **Capitol Steps ANGP fundraiser**  
**performance**, 7:00 pm,  
 Auditorium  
 27 Wed **Principal's coffee**, 9:15 am,  
 Auditorium  
**Rising freshman parent**  
**orientation**, 7:00 pm, Auditorium  
 (snow date 28 Thu)  
 28 Thu **Second grading period ends**  
 29 Fri **Student holiday/teacher**  
**workday**

### February 2010

1 Mon **Student holiday/teacher**  
**workday**  
 2 Tue **Third grading period begins**  
**Rising senior 2010-11 course**  
**registration** (through 19 Feb)  
 3 Wed **Choral pyramid concert**, 7:00  
 pm, Auditorium  
**PTSA general membership**  
**meeting**, 7:30 pm, PTSA  
 conference center  
 4 Thu **Science fair**, 3:00 pm, Cafeteria  
 (snow date 5 Fri)  
 5 Fri **Theatre trip to Orlando, FL**  
 (through 7 Sun)  
 6 Sat **ACT at LHS**  
**Battle of the Bands** sponsored  
 by the class of 2010, time tba,  
 Old Firehouse Teen Center  
 8 Mon **Sophomore parent coffee**, 9:30  
 am, Auditorium  
**Second quarter report cards to**  
**students**  
 9 Tue **Senior parent coffee**, 9:30 am-  
 11:00 am, Auditorium  
 11 Thu **Touching Bases: walk-in**  
**parent/teacher conferences**,  
 7:30 am - 9:30 am, Cafeteria and  
 Main Gym  
**Three-hour delayed opening**  
**for students - classes begin at**  
**10:20 am**