

Lufkin En-Lightning

Shining the light of success on all.



DEC. 1, 2008

Message From Dr. Parry Graham, Principal

Dear Lufkin Parents,

In my experience, one of the most critical strategies of any successful school is effective parent communication—both how a school communicates information to parents, and how parents are encouraged to communicate information to the school. In the next couple months, Lufkin Road Middle School is going to undertake two initiatives to attempt to improve parent communication, and I wanted to give you a brief overview of those initiatives.

The first initiative is called SPAN: Student/Parent Access Network. SPAN is a web-based program that provides students and parents with access to students' electronic records, including attendance, discipline, course schedules and grades. What tends to make parents happiest is the grades piece. So, once SPAN is fully activated, a conversation with your child might go like this:

"Hey, how did that social studies test go last week? And have you been turning in all your math homework?"

"Oh, I totally aced that test, I think I got like a 100 or something. And yeah, I've turned in all my math homework. I'm way caught up now."

"Really? Well, let's just go online on SPAN and

double-check."

"Hold on, did I say 100? Maybe it was more like a 75. And now that I think about it, maybe I do have a couple Math assignments missing. I guess maybe I should go start working on those."



We are planning to have SPAN in place by the second semester, so please be looking for more detailed information this month about how to set up your account. Once the account is set up, you will have password-protected, online access to your individual child's information. Teachers will update grading information at least twice a month, and discipline and attendance information will be updated on a more regular basis. As with any new initiative, we expect some bumps in the road with rolling this out, and we appreciate your patience as we work to provide you with more timely and detailed information about your child's progress.

The second initiative I wanted to let you know about is an upcoming online parent survey. At Lufkin, we believe that we are accountable to our parents and our community, and we would like to hear from you about ways in which we can improve. I will be sending out more detailed information, with a link to the survey, this month. After gathering your feedback, we will begin working on ways to improve in the areas you identify. And, if any parents are interested in working with us on specific tasks that we identify, we would welcome that assistance!

I hope that these two initiatives will help us to improve the quality of parent-school communication, and I hope you find them to be helpful. Again, thank you for being a Lufkin parent, and best wishes for the holiday season!

Dr. Parry Graham

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'Lufkin Less Paper' Program Helps Students Who Don't Have Computer Access at Home

Lufkin Road Middle has started a new program this year called "Lufkin Less Paper." This program allows students who do not have computer access at home to use the computers in the media center after school on Tuesdays.

The session runs from 2:15 to 4:15, but students are not required to stay the entire time. The activity bus is



available at 4:15 for students participating in "Lufkin Less Paper."

If your child is interested in staying, he or she should bring in a signed note granting permission to stay, and give it to one of his or her teachers to reserve a computer. Or, parents can email Dr. Hedrick at chedrick@2wcpss.net to communicate your child's interest.

Lufkin Students Raise More Money for Mutt Strutt

By Mrs. Christesen

Nov. 1 was a picture-perfect day for **Mutt Strutt**. This annual dog walk festival and fundraiser for the Wake County Animal Care, Control and Adoption Center took place, as usual, in Raleigh's Historic Oak View Park.

Animal shelters have been in existence for over 200 years, but this facility opened in 1998. The shelter is a local facility, and is independent of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), which is a national organization. Lufkin Road Middle School has been supporting the shelter for six years.

Enthusiastic dog lovers showed up with their "best friends" of varied breeds, sizes and coat colors. For the third time Lufkin hosted a stand at the event.

Together with well established pet organizations such as Carolina Paws, Petsmart, SPCA, Rally to Rescue, and Just Dogs Gourmet, Lufkin NJHS students brought dog treats and homemade cookies for pet owners to raise more money for Wake County pets. (Lufkin donated \$1,000 to the shelter earlier this year.)

Both Lufkin students and parents came to the park to check out Mutt Strutt. Among the participants were Allie Heinsohn (8-3), who brought homemade doggie treats. She found the recipe online. "I love dogs, even though I do not have one," Allie said. "I bake sometimes, but this was my first time baking dog cookies." Her baking art did not go unnoticed.

"This was a good way to be with friends," Allie



said. "The dog contests were especially fun. I liked the *best trick category* the most—when a dog put his paws on his mistress's shoulders."

Even though our students' dogs did not participate in the contests, they added to the fun at the stand. Katie Lee (7-2) came with her cute little dog, who got pampered quite a bit. Also, Jenna De Candio (8-1) brought her family's two dogs. Students were glad to see Ms. Amy Phillips, 7th grade counselor, make an appearance with her remarkably calm and well-mannered yellow lab mix, Sadie.

One of the main goals of Mutt Strutt is to create awareness of affordable pet neutering options in Wake County. I would like to thank all students who participated this year and also the parents who came out to support us. It is important when young people inform themselves about pet overpopulation issues early in life and get involved.

Lufkin Students Participate in 'Kids Voting' Nov. 4

By Mrs. Christesen

Do you still remember Election Day? Who could forget the excitement? The colors: red, white and blue? The names of the candidates vying for your attention everywhere you looked?

On Nov. 4, several Lufkin students were involved in **Kids Voting**. The students were stationed in the school's media center, an official voting location for Wake County. Their job was to welcome children who accompanied adult voters. They asked the children to complete the ballots as if they were real

voters. In recognition of their efforts, the young voters received stickers and restaurant coupons.

Kyle Werner, a 7-4 National Junior Honor Society student, said: "It was a lot of fun being able to encourage younger kids to participate in voting, just like their parents did."

Sydney Wolford (7-4), Allie Davis (7-4) and Jeffrey Bell (6-1), volunteered their time to participate in the **Kids Voting** initiative at Lufkin Road Middle School.

Battle of the Books Club Prepares for County Competition

The Battle of the Books club will begin meeting twice a week in January and February in preparation for the county competition on Sat., Feb. 28. Below is a listing of future meeting dates and times. Club members are busy reading from the state list. Mock competitions during club meetings in January will prepare club members for the county competition. If you have questions about BOB, call Mrs. Ruby in the Media Center at (919) 363-1079.

Schedule

Wed., Dec. 10, 2:15-3:15
Wed., Jan. 7, 2:15-3:30
Fri., Jan. 9, 2:15-3:30
Wed., Jan. 14, 2:15-3:30
Fri., Jan. 16, 2:15-3:30
Wed., Jan. 21, 2:15-3:30
Fri., Jan. 23, 2:15-3:30
Wed., Jan. 28, 2:15-3:30
Fri., Jan. 30, 2:15-3:30
Wed., Feb. 4, 2:15-3:30
Fri., Feb. 6, 2:15-3:30
Wed., Feb. 11, 2:15-3:30
Fri., Feb. 13, 2:15-3:30
Wed., Feb. 18, 2:15-3:30
Fri., Feb. 20, 2:15-3:30
Wed., Feb. 25, 2:15-3:30
Fri., Feb. 27, 2:15-3:30

County Competition

Panther Creek High School
Sat., Feb. 28, 2009

Lufkin Congratulates Teachers Stacy Rinehart and Marti Capaforte for Receiving Wake Electric's Bright Ideas Grants

We are proud to announce that two teachers at Lufkin Road Middle School have received Wake Electric's Bright Ideas grants sponsored by N.C.'s Touchstone Energy Cooperative.

Stacy Rinehart has received a grant for a human body kit that shows interaction between body systems. It allows students to be a part of scientific investigations and enables them to continue using their science notebooking skills. It also helps students understand the role the environment plays in human health.

Marti Capaforte received a grant that enables students to participate in the most popular of all fitness crazes: dancing! Through the use of a "Dance Dance Revolution® Group Fitness System," students will have more opportunities to dance than ever before. This program gives them a chance to take up dancing for the first time or brush up on moves they might have learned back when they "rocked around the clock."

Congratulations to both teachers!

Questions or Comments About This Newsletter?

If you have questions or comments about the *Lufkin En-Lightning* newsletter, please email Beth Shugg at pta484@wcpss.net. Also, please send in January newsletter submissions by Dec. 29.

Volunteer Registration for 2008-2009 Continues

Here is some information about the volunteer registration process at Lufkin Road Middle School which continues throughout the school year.

- All volunteers must register **EVERY** school year.
- You can register at any school in Wake County. Just be sure to select Lufkin as one of your schools.
- Register **EARLY** in the year. It takes just a few minutes. Don't let a late registration cause you to miss out on a field trip!
- Being a field trip chaperone, a one-on-one tutor, or a club sponsor requires a Level 3 or 4 clearance. Bring your driver's license number,

social security number and addresses for residences during the last seven years for a background check that **CAN TAKE SEVERAL WEEKS.**

- Volunteers **WILL NOT** receive an automatic confirmation of their registration or background check clearance. You will **ONLY** be contacted if there is a problem.

Please contact Sandra Boyd in the Media Center at 363-1079 or email sboyd@wcpss.net if you have any questions or concerns about registering as a volunteer.

Download the "Lufkin Ledger"

To read the latest edition of Lufkin's student produced newspaper, "The Lufkin Ledger," paste this link in your browser:

<http://lufkinroad.wcpss.net/home/downloads/newsletters/lloct08.pdf>

Lufkin Road Middle Scores a Conference Sportsmanship Award

Congratulations to Lufkin's fall sports teams—football, volleyball and girls soccer—which were awarded a conference Sportsmanship Award in November. These awards are voted on by the coaches of the opposing schools in our conference. Way to go teams!

Seven Lufkin Teachers Earn Board Certification

The following teachers recently received National Board Certification status: Stacey Johnson, Sheryl Lane, Jan Bell, Jennie Jones, Ryan Rodgers, Marti Capaforte and Amanda Matheny. This brings the total of Nationally Board Certified teachers at Lufkin to 20 out of 74.

Dr. Parry Graham, principal of Lufkin, said recently that he is proud of his students and his teachers. These honors are "one more indicator of the kind of people we have at Lufkin."

Lufkin Year-Round Middle School

Parry Graham, Ed.D., Principal
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Lufkin Year-Round Middle School PTA

Cathy Wood, President
Kristie Davis, Vice President of Programs
Steve Wood, Treasurer
Missy Laster, Secretary

Delivering Homework to School

If your child forgets to bring his or her homework or a project to school, and you would like to drop it off after the school day has begun, our front office staff will be happy to place the work in the appropriate teacher's mailbox in our work room. Because we wish to minimize disruptions, we do not send emails or make calls to classrooms about work that is dropped off, but we would encourage you to either leave the teacher a written note, or email him or her directly to explain any details about the work.