

WLHS Monthly Memo

From the desk of Tom DeKeyser

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February Count Day

Next Wednesday, February 10, our school does a formal count of all students in the building. We report this information to the state, and in turn, they allocate money to us to provide the education your children receive. February's count day is lesser known than the September date partly because the amount of money we receive as a result of the first count day is so significant (75%). However, the remainder (25%) of the allocation is based on our attendance on this second count day.

Please encourage your son or daughter to be present all day next Wednesday. I am anticipating our enrollment to be between 410 and 420. If you have lived in Whitmore Lake for a while, you realize this enrollment has grown steadily since the early part of the decade, which marked enrollments below 300. As a district, we are proud of the fact that we have grown while so many high schools around have declined. Thank you in advance for your support and encouragement.

The Chatty Kathy

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Funky February

After 15 years in education, my experience has been that strange things generally happen in February. I'm not sure why. It could be that it's about midway through the school year, and the students are restless. It could be that February in itself is an odd month with its fluctuating number of days, not to mention its days honoring groundhogs, presidents, and romance (how's that for a trio?). Personally, I like to blame the weather. As much as we are ready for winter to be over by now, it usually lingers on for a few more months. And, it's not usually the white, fluffy winter weather of pictures and movies but rather the brown, slushy stuff that my husband complains about every time we leave the UP and head back home. Ultimately, the reason for the February funk isn't important; it's how you cope with it that is. I encourage you to do something fun this month to keep your spirits high and to help fight the February blues.

Upcoming WLHS Events

<u>Count Day</u>	Wednesday, February 10
<u>Mid-Winter Break</u>	Friday, February 12-Monday, February 15
<u>College Goal Sunday</u>	Sunday, February 14, 2010 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at dozens of sites across the state
	For more information, visit http://www.micollegegoal.org .
<u>2nd Trimester Exams</u>	Wednesday, March 3 5 th hour exam
	Thursday, March 4 1 st and 2 nd hour exams
	Friday, March 5 3 rd and 4 th hour exams
<u>No School for Students</u>	Monday, March 8

3rd Trimester Begins Tuesday, March 9

Because juniors will be taking the ACT test on this day, there will be no school for freshmen, sophomores, and seniors.

Michigan Merit Exam Tuesday, March 9-Thursday, March 11

Juniors will be taking the Michigan Merit Exam for the first three days of the third trimester. They will take the ACT test on Tuesday, the WorkKeys test on Wednesday, and the Michigan Math, Science, and Social Studies tests on Thursday. Juniors will be able to leave immediately following the conclusion of testing on Thursday. Additionally, juniors who successfully complete all three days of testing will not be required to report to school on Thursday, April 1, which is the day before Spring Break begins.

PLAN and EXPLORE Tests Wednesday, March 10

While the juniors are taking the WorkKeys test, the sophomores will be taking the PLAN test and the freshmen will be taking the EXPLORE test. These tests are "pre-ACT" tests and are powerful predictors of success on the ACT. At the same time, these tests focus attention on both career preparation and improving academic achievement. We believe these tests are very important and encourage students to take them seriously. Not only are they valuable in terms of identifying students' strengths and weaknesses, but scores will also be one aspect of students' admission into honors and AP courses.

Spring Sports Begin Monday, March 15

Any student interested in participating in baseball, softball, track, or golf must have a current physical on file in the high school office before practices begin.

Save the Date

College Planning Workshop Thursday, May 6, at 7:00 p.m. in the theater

Aquinas College will be sponsoring this evening for juniors and their parents. They'll address topics that are important for juniors to know as they embark on their college search, including academics, athletics, financial aid, scholarships, social opportunities, and much more. Their goal for the evening is to empower students with the information they need to find the college that's right for them. Please join us for this wonderful opportunity.

Opportunities for Students and Parents

Homework Club: Homework Club is available for students on Mondays in Ms. Taylor's room (B124) and Wednesdays in Ms. Osgood's room (B206) from 2:45-3:30. Computers are available for student use. Students are expected to bring work with them, follow school rules, respect other students, respect volunteers in the classroom, respect all equipment, and have a ride home at 3:30 p.m.

Parenting Through Separation and Divorce: The University Center for the Child and the Family (UCCF) is offering a workshop to help parents understand their children's needs as they face the challenges of separation and divorce. It offers specific suggestions for creating the most beneficial post-divorce parenting relationships. The workshop is free and open to the public, and it is an approved alternative to the SMILE program presented by Friend of The Court. It is held at the UM Center for the Child and the Family, which is located at 530 Church Street, UM East Hall, Suite 1465, Ann Arbor, MI.

This workshop is available March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7, or August 2. Registration is required. Please call 734.764.9466 to reserve a place. Lectures are from 7:30-9:00 p.m. Free parking is available in the UM Church Street structure. For more information, visit

http://www.umuccf.org/opencms/export/sites/uccf/pdfs/SeparationDivorce/SeparationDivorce_2009-2010.pdf

January Spotlight on Success Winners

Spotlight on Success (SOS) is our revamped Student of the Month program. Each week, staff members nominate students for their accomplishments in the areas of academics, extracurricular activities, and citizenship. At the end of the month, the staff votes on a winner for each category. The winners are showcased on announcements, in the display cases, as well as on plaques in the counseling office. The idea behind having three categories is to allow us to recognize students for achievements beyond the classroom. Congratulations to January's winners:

Sophomore Xiao Li, nominated by Mr. Stidham for Academics

Xiao is in my American Literature class and is one of the most polite students I've ever taught. Xiao will ask questions, and it's instantly rewarding to help her because I see the expression on her face change from confusion to understanding, and for that, she is so grateful. She is extremely motivated to learn. Xiao told me that when her family moved to Whitmore Lake two years ago that she didn't know a word of English. Currently, she has one of the highest grades of my 50 American Literature students. I hope everyone has the opportunity to teach her.

Sophomore Kelly Spurlock, nominated by Mrs. Levy for Extracurricular Activities

Kelly was very inspirational in outlining the Snowcoming plans for the sophomore class. She participated in building the board every day after school and did an excellent job delegating what needed to be completed by the end of the week. She took great pride putting her plans together and showed excellent vice-president leadership. Kelly is a wonderful asset representing the sophomore class as vice-president.

Freshman Stephen Harvey, nominated by Ms. Lupi, Mrs. Sailer, and Ms. Osgood for Citizenship

Stephen is in charge of raising and lowering the flags in front of the school. He takes pride in doing this every day. Thanks for a job well done, Stephen. *Ms. Lupi*

Stephen puts up the flags every day. *Mrs. Sailer*

I'm on my way in to school at 7:30 in the morning, and it feels like it's 10 below. There's Stephen putting up the flags in the front of the building. Not only is he actively improving our school, but he is also making me smile. *Ms. Osgood*

Honor Roll

My apologies to Shelby Wessel, who was mistakenly left off the list of honor roll students published in the January newsletter. Shelby indeed earned a 3.3 GPA first trimester and should have been recognized. Congratulations, Shelby.

Senior Section

Senior Slide Show

In preparation for the Class of 2010 Senior Slide Show, Mrs. VonVoigtlander needs the following for each senior: a baby picture, a picture of your student between the ages of about 6 and 10, and a senior picture. Only the face from all three of these pictures will be used. Scanned photos will not work. The larger the picture, the better. Professionally-taken photos provide the best quality. All photos will be returned as soon as they have been scanned. Please put them in some type of envelope marked clearly with your student's first and last name and give them to Mrs. VonVoigtlander. Spring Break, which begins at the end of the day April 1, 2010, is the deadline for turning in photos.

Note: The digital photo CD's that the studios give families to review senior pictures are NOT a good source for pictures for the slide show. Although they show up fine on computers for the purposes of review, they do not work for the slide show. The companies protect their copyright by pixelating the images, resulting in poor quality when copied.

Financial Aid

- As of January 1, students and parents can begin submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2010-2011 school year. The FAFSA on the Web worksheet is available at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/before012.htm>. Remember that before you can submit the form, you'll need to

visit the website (www.fafsa.ed.gov) to register for a pin number. See the information below for various resources to help you complete this very important form.

- For those of you who missed Financial Aid Night on December 2, please visit <http://www.emich.edu/finaid/>. This page has a link to *Financing Education Beyond High School*, which is the PowerPoint presentation that the EMU representative used as the basis of her informational talk. Additionally, there is a link to *Cash Course*, which offers information about financial basics, paying for college, college life, and the world of work. The *Paying for College* link is particularly helpful for those of you looking for scholarships, loans, and grants.
- The Eastern Michigan University Office of Financial Aid proudly presents FAFSA Fridays, where financial aid advisors will help individuals complete their FAFSA for free. Appointments are available every Friday, January 8 through February 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Contact EMU at 734.487.0455 or financial_aid@emich.edu to schedule an appointment. You do not need to be an EMU student to take advantage of this opportunity.
- FastWeb (www.fastweb.com) is a great resource for scholarships. It has tools for students to search for college scholarships by their interests. The matching feature lets students search for scholarships that match their educational goals and activities after they fill out a personal profile. The form asks for their educational background, school activities, and what they plan on studying in college. Students have the power to search, find, and apply for college scholarships all on one website!
- FinAid (www.finaid.org) is another excellent resource. It's a comprehensive source of student financial aid information, advice and tools -- on or off the web.
- Any scholarship opportunity that comes through the Counseling Office will be posted on Trojan Talk and on the WLHS website. A binder of the scholarship opportunities is also available in the Counseling Office.
- Colleges and universities offer many merit-based and need-based scholarships. Parents and students should contact the financial aid office of individual schools to find out for which scholarships they may be eligible.

Resources for Parents and Students

The EMU Counseling Clinic

The EMU Counseling Clinic offers personal, family, career, assessment, and academic counseling that taps into people's potential and builds upon their strengths and the strengths of their support systems. Services are provided to individuals, couples, families, and children. For more information about the EMU Counseling Clinic and how to schedule an appointment, visit <http://www.emich.edu/coe/clinics/counseling/index.html>.

Ele's Place: A Healing Center for Grieving Children

Ele's Place is a non-profit, community-based organization whose mission is to create awareness of and support for grieving children and their families. Ele's Place has locations in Ann Arbor and Lansing. For more information, visit www.elesplace.org.

United Way 2-1-1

United Way 2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember telephone number that connects people with information and referrals about and to human services, for everyday needs and in times of crisis. The 2-1-1 call specialists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and are ready to provide information about a wide range of community services, including health care, job training, child care, mortgage foreclosure assistance, and more.

Users outside of the southeastern Michigan area can visit www.211.org to find out if 2-1-1 is available in your area or call United Way for Southeastern Michigan 2-1-1 by dialing 800.552.1183.

NINELINE

NINELINE (800-999-9999) is a free, confidential crisis hotline that operates 365 days a year from 2 p.m.-midnight across all time zones. NINELINE crisis counselors utilize a database of more than 30,000 social service and child welfare agencies so callers can be connected with immediate assistance from whichever state or territory a call originates. They answer thousands of phone calls every year from kids, parents, and caregivers dealing with serious problems like abuse, running away, and suicide.

NINELINE is also available on the Internet at www.NINELINE.org. Here, caregivers or young people can submit questions via e-mail or participate in forum conversations monitored by NINELINE counselors.

Get STOPPED: Sheriffs Telling Our Parents and Promoting Educated Drivers

The goal of the STOPPED program is to reduce the number of young drivers who are injured or killed in motor vehicle crashes each year. Register for STOPPED online at www.michigansheriff.com or call 800.875.5500.

Parents Unite to Prevent Underage Drinking: A Guide to Action for Michigan Families

This booklet is a joint project of the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) and the Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association (MB&WWA), two organizations that are committed to prevent underage drinking in our communities. The booklet contains excellent information and resources for parents. http://www.mbwwa.org/Portals/23/parentsunite_WEB_mil.pdf

Teens Using Drugs: What to Know and What to Do

Dawn Farm, the Livingston/Washtenaw Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act Consortium, and Saint Joseph Mercy Health System Mission Services are sponsoring a free, ongoing, two-part lecture series on how to understand and identify teen substance abuse and how to help when a young person may have a problem with alcohol and other drugs. For more information on the series, visit www.teensusingdrugs.org.

MIP Education Weekend: A Resource to Reduce Underage Drinking and Drug Use

The MIP Education Weekend, an intensive 42-hour intervention, uses a combination of substance abuse education, challenge ropes courses, and contact with caring professionals to promote active learning, use of prior experience to increase perception of harm of future use of alcohol and other drugs, self-improvement, and the acquisition of refusal skills. Parent involvement is required. The weekend is used as an educational alternative by the school, court, community, or parent to reduce underage drinking and drug use.

The MIP Education Weekend is held at Wild Wood Ranch in Howell, Michigan. Check-in is 5 p.m. on the Friday of the scheduled weekend. The fee for the weekend is \$15.00. If you have a youth who could benefit from attending the MIP Education Weekend, please contact Anne King Hudson at 810.220.8192.