



Volume 15 Issue 4  
September 12, 2011

*"Semper Excelsius-  
The Liberty Way"*

The Liberty Common School  
*Common Knowledge, Common Virtues, Common Sense*  
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's Happening At LCS-K-6th

**Sept. 12:** October Lunch  
Calendars are due.

**Sept. 13:** CVC Meeting: 8 a.m.-  
9 a.m. Teacher's Lounge

**Sept. 14-16:** 6th graders attend  
Eco-Week.

**Sept. 23-Oct. 7:** October Count  
(See explanation, page 4)

**Sept. 23:** Liberty t-shirt day

**Sept. 30:** Individual Student  
Photos. **This is a free dress  
day.**



Student Directories are now  
available in the Front Office for  
\$1.00. Stop by and get yours  
today.

### Liberty Common School Board of Directors 2011-2012

**Amy Redstone**-378-1170  
**Dan Provaznik**- 223-0188  
**Mark Sutherland**-225-0432  
**Cassy Turner**- 691-3027  
**Jeff Webb**-545-9636  
**Bill Werst**- 631-8379

**Board of Directors Meeting:**  
Liberty Common School  
September 15, 2011  
1725 Sharp Point Dr.  
Faculty Room  
7:00 p.m.

## Headmaster Writing by Russ Spicer

### The History of Liberty Common School Part 3 of 3

*The following is the conclusion of "The History of Liberty Common School" written by Maureen Schaffer.*

It was June of 1996. Advocates for the Core Knowledge charter school had come up short after being legally out-manuevered by the school district. The parents faced a \$5000 debt for legal filings and newsletters to its growing list of supporters.

The unsinkable charter group wasted no time mobilizing its next charter effort. They "passed the hat" yet again, this time requesting additional donations to hire a lawyer of their own.

The parents contacted local attorney Mike Maxwell to assist in rewriting and negotiating their charter. Maxwell was immediately captivated by the critical nature of the school choice movement. He and his partners donated their time and expertise to the cause.

The name of the new school would be Liberty Common. At a *common* school, students of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds could obtain a common education.

But, why *Liberty*? *Liberty* stood for parents who would now have educational choice. *Liberty* stood for teachers who would no longer have to work in a broken system. And most importantly, *Liberty* would symbolize the true freedom that can only be achieved when a student possesses an educated mind.

On October 1, 1996 the charter application for Liberty Common School was submitted to PSD, along with a file drawer of supporting documents, reports, and studies. The new charter provided in-depth rationale for each aspect of the school the parents deemed non-negotiable. Still, negotiations drug on for months.

Finally PSD approved the charter, and a 5-year contract signed on February 24, 1997. Now, the real work would begin!

The charter group scrambled to simultaneously find a building and hire staff. Teams of parents conducted interviews at Dr. Everett's Urology Center. Applicants were quite relieved to learn that physical exams were not part of the drill!

Although there was still no school building, one courageous administrator, Dr. Kathryn Knox, took a gamble and signed on as Liberty's first headmaster. She quickly melded with the team and donated dozens of hours interviewing potential teachers.

A powerhouse staff with a pioneering spirit was assembled, including Connie Behr, Gretchen Jeffers, Dave Lunn, Beth Olson, Cherie Pederson, Tina Shockley, and Jeff Seiner, who are all still cornerstones of Liberty today. Teachers joined forces with parents to identify curriculum resources and skills programs to augment the Core Knowledge Sequence.

Meanwhile, parent Peter Kast, worked fervently to pull together a suitable building and financing for the new school. Pursuing multiple deals simultaneously, Peter never gave up as each financing option ultimately collapsed. Would anyone lend money to this unknown entity called a charter school?

(Continued on page 4)

## How to Reach Us

- Our office hours are **7:30-4:00 p.m.**
- Our telephone number is **(970) 482-9800**
- Our attendance line is **(970) 482-9800**, option 2, please call by 8:30 a.m.
- Please note that you may go to your student's classroom and wait for them to be dismissed only after 2:50 p.m.
- If you need to take your child to an appointment during school hours, please come to the Front Office, sign them out and we will call them out of class.
- All students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. must be signed in at the Front Office. It is important that a reason be written as this determines if the tardy is excused or not.
- Our school closes at 4:00 p.m. All students need to have left the building by 4:00 p.m. or chaperoned by a parent or guardian.

## Hair Feathers



Parents,

Hair feathers are recent trend with our students. The Liberty dress code states, "Hair color must be natural and limited to two natural colors". Please help us reinforce this dress code policy by not having your child wear colored feathers (feathers on the left). Hair feathers are ok if they are a natural colored (feathers on the right).

Thanks,

Keith A. Churchill, Jr.  
Elementary Principal

## Classroom Volunteer Coordinator Meeting

All Classroom Volunteer Coordinators please plan to attend a meeting on September 13th in the Teacher's Lounge at 8 a.m. Contact Kendra Simms to RSVP or with any questions : 691-2033 or RonSimm872@msn.com . See you on September 13th.

## Grandparents Day Planning Committee Needs More Volunteers

Planning started last week for this year's 11/22/11 Grandparents Day. We need more volunteers to help pull off our second-annual event in splendid fashion. If you can volunteer or make donations to the effort, please [CLICK HERE](#).

## Attendance Alert!

Dear Parents,

Attendance is very important here at Liberty Common School. When the students are here, they learn more. When they are here on time, they learn more. We want to provide the students with maximum class time throughout the year to ensure that students are getting maximum teacher contact time. Please make sure that you are dropping students off on time so that they can get ready for the day. If you are late (we know life happens), please make sure to sign in at the front office so that we have a record of the tardy. Once you have dropped off your child, please make sure to clear the halls so that the classroom teachers can get started with their day. If you are staying to volunteer, please report back to the office to sign in and get your nametag. We love our volunteers.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Keith A. Churchill, Jr.  
Elementary Principal

## October Count

All public schools in Colorado receive funding from the State based on the number of students who attend their school. It is critical that your student be present during the October Count period. The count occurs September 23rd-October 7th. September 30th is the official count date set by the state. If your child will be absent for more than two days in a row other than for an illness, during this time, please see the Front Office for an official document to sign. Thank you.

## Save The Date 11/22/11 Grandparents Day

This year's Liberty Grandparents Day is Tuesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Please notify grandparents now so they'll have plenty of time for travel arrangements. This is a very popular Liberty event. Invitations will be mailed in a few weeks. The RSVP date is **Friday, Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>**. This is very firm RSVP date. Due to limited seating, class scheduling with grandchildren and other special arrangements, no RSVPs will be accepted after Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>. Please don't put our all-volunteer Grandparents-Day Planning Committee in the unenviable position of telling your grandma "no." That's never a good thing – but they'll really do it if her RSVP comes in after Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>.



## Free CSU Girls Basketball Clinic

Attention future girl basketball stars. The CSU Women's Basketball team will be teaching basic fundamental skills through interactive drills and activities to any 1st-5th grade girl.

**When:** Saturday, October 1st– 9:00-noon

**Where:** CSU Intramural Gym (just East of Moby Gym)

**How:** Sign up in the Front Office by Sept. 30th

**Cost:** FREE !!

## Singapore Math Boot Camp

We have been in school now for three weeks and many of you have had a chance to acquaint yourselves with your student's math program, Singapore Math. If you have questions or want further information about this great math program, please mark your calendar for September 20th from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Cassie Turner, Singapore Math Consultant and LCS Board Member will be presenting information and answering questions. Please RSVP to Jill Ronen, Administrative Assistant at [jronen@libertycommon.org](mailto:jronen@libertycommon.org).



## Is College Really Worth It?

By: Bob Schaffer, LCHS Principal

Students at LCHS are suitably astute to twig the wit, prescience and wisdom of Benjamin Franklin's adage, "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

Conversely, at Liberty, we believe that by succeeding to prepare our scholars, we are preparing them to succeed.

Last week's Monday Notes newsletter contained an announcement about the In-State College Fair being held tonight at Rocky Mountain High School. The event runs from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, see the nearby announcement or [CLICK HERE](#) for an event flyer.

There is also an Out-of-State College Fair scheduled for next month (October 11<sup>th</sup>) at Poudre High School. Both events are open to all Liberty students and their families.

Liberty's college counselor Mr. Jesse Morrill will be at both events, too. If you need his guidance or advice while there, feel free to track him down and ask. He'd love to see you, be of help and assist you in getting prepared for college.

As a college-preparatory high school, we presume college is in each LCHS student's future. Still, a burning question harries America like never before: Is college really worth it?

A recent Pew Research Center report reveals 57% of Americans say the country's higher-education system fails to provide students with good value for the money. A much bigger majority (75%) says college is too expensive to afford. ([CLICK HERE](#) to see the report).

The Pew survey found college graduates estimate their annual income to be \$20,000 higher due to their college degree. Yet, like all economic tradeoffs, the high cost of a degree – especially from a high-quality college – has many wondering if college is in their future.

Clearly, there is at least some value in going to college; but just how much value is, to be sure, a direct function of whether a student is prepared to attend. Fewer American graduates are.

On this point, Pew supplies vexing commentary: "A majority of college presidents (58%) say public high school students arrive at college less well prepared than their counterparts of a decade ago; just 6% say they are better prepared. Also, 52% of presidents say college students today study less than their predecessors did a decade ago; just 7% say they study more."

The path to college is obviously a strenuous one, but it's certainly not hopeless – at least not for LCHS students. In fact, I think theirs is actually pretty promising and exciting. The difference is Ben Franklin's axiom applied to Liberty's rigorous curriculum.



Fall Festival October 7th  
5:30-8:00 p.m.

Come join the Liberty Common family for a celebration of the season at the Fall Festival. There will be games, crafts, prizes, 3 bouncy houses and food to enjoy. **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS** to help run craft tables and game centers, as well as donations of candy, (nut free,) 2 lt. pop, cupcakes, frosting, sprinkles and sugar cookies (store bought,) and help setting up and cleaning up afterwards. If you can help in any way, please contact Marnie Dame at 391-8983 or [marniedame@msn.com](mailto:marniedame@msn.com). Thank you!

Congratulations Student Council  
Representatives 2011-2012



T-Shirt Day is **September 23rd**. Show your school spirit by wearing your Liberty T-Shirt.

## Is College Really Worth It? (Continued from page 3)

Far from failing to prepare, the depth, pace and clarity of the LCHS academic program sets our scholars apart. It sets them up for opportunities that come only with honest hard work, focused study, engaged parents and expert teachers as guides along the way.

At tonight's college fair, our juniors will begin to see for themselves how their Liberty education is affording them valuable prospects that they've earned through applied academic effort. Their Liberty advantage puts them all closer to scholarships, financial aid and access to America's top universities.

Indeed, these are advantages that add compounded value to a college education. Truly, for an imminent LCHS graduate, college really is worth it.

If he were around today, I believe Ben Franklin would regard Liberty Common High School as excellent preparation for college success. I'm certain he would share my very high opinion of our well-prepared college-bound students.

## Attention First Grade Parents

If your child participated in the 100 books marathon over the summer with Mrs. Shockley, Mrs. Trout, and Mrs. Benzel please note that the students will be receiving their marathon t-shirts on September 26th.

Please have your student wear their t-shirt on September 27<sup>th</sup> for our first Character Assembly. Thank you.

## Headmaster Writing (Continued from Page 1)

It was now summer and fall was fast approaching. A building was needed immediately if there was to be sufficient time for renovations. Peter assembled a small group of investors to purchase the Colgate factory near the detention center and lease the building to the charter school. The deal closed in late June.

The facility question was answered, but substantial reconstruction was necessary to convert the former toothpaste and mouthwash factory into a school. Thirteen Liberty families put up personal assets as collateral for the million dollar construction loan. It was now July. Amazingly, the Neenan Company completed the massive remodel in less than 60 days!

The concrete floors were uncarpeted, and the upstairs remained unfinished. A support column stood in the middle of the small gym. The performance hall was non-existent. But none of that mattered.

In September 1997, a dream became a reality as Liberty Common School opened its doors to more than four hundred eager young students in kindergarten through 7<sup>th</sup> grade. And the rest is history!