

## **LUSHER CHARTER NEWSLETTER #2 – March 2008**

The first issues of the Lusher Charter Newsletter was well received last month by families of middle and high school students, so here's Issue #2. Parents and Teachers: we are relying on you to forward news of honors and accomplishments to us at [jenny\\_cromer@lusherschool.org](mailto:jenny_cromer@lusherschool.org) or [susanlkrinsky@gmail.com](mailto:susanlkrinsky@gmail.com).

For upcoming events, EDLINE ([www.edline.net](http://www.edline.net)) is the most complete and up-to-date source for the dates and times of events.

### ***Lusher HS Urban Farm***

The buzz around school about the Urban Farming class led us to ask the instructor, Mr. Theron Cross, to tell us more about the content of the course, the goals, and the interdisciplinary approach. According to Mr. Cross, the course “provides students with direct experience in the practices of sustainable agriculture. We have weekly lectures (including guest lectures) and occasional field trips, but the course emphasis is on practical skill development in intensive food production in the small farm or garden. Students receive instruction and experience in soil science, plant propagation, greenhouse management, composting, the use of animal and green manures, equipment operation, pest control, small livestock management, weed control strategies, irrigation system design and management, tool maintenance, vegetable and fruit culture, orchard systems and more. Various systems of agriculture are introduced and practiced within the Urban Farm, including organic, French Intensive/Biodynamic, food forests, and Permaculture. In addition to practical skills, we also compare the costs and benefits of various agriculture systems, including modern petroleum-based agriculture, on local and world economies, cultures, and environments. Although the course is listed as a science elective, we try to tie Urban Farming into all aspects of modern living.”

If you would like to contribute to the Urban Farm, please consider a donation of any of the following:

- Edible plants (fruit trees, berries, vegetables, herbs)
- Organic potting soil
- Tomato cages
- Compost bin

Please contact Mr. Theron Cross at [theron\\_cross@lusherschool.org](mailto:theron_cross@lusherschool.org) to arrange to donate items. Financial contributions are welcome as well. Checks should be made out to Lusher Charter School, with “Urban Farming Class” in the note space, and can be sent to Ms. Lynden Swazey at the Fortier campus.

## ***Awards and Honors***

### **World Wildlife Federation Youth Climate Summit**

11<sup>th</sup> grade student Taylor Yarborough has been selected to participate in the World Wildlife Federation Youth Climate Summit. As a participant in this program, she will be working with a scientist from the USDA Forest Service, conducting climate modeling on the WWF Southeast Rivers and Streams Ecoregion over the next several months. Taylor will be contributing her own research on the effects of climate change in our part of the world. She will also attend the WWF Allianz Youth Climate Camp in Mobile, Alabama where she will present her research on climate change and its impact on our region. Following this, Taylor will attend the Youth Summit, which will be held in Washington, DC in July.

### **Big Easy Award Winners**

Lusher Dance faculty member Erin Healan and Lusher Arts After Hours instructor Kettye Voltz received their third Big Easy Award. Ms. Healan and Ms. Voltz are co-directors of the Tsunami Dance Company, which won the award for Best Modern Presentation, for “Portraits in a Forgotten City.”

### **National Merit Scholar at Lusher**

Sophia Cinel, class of 2008, has been named a National Merit Scholar.

### **New Post-Diluvian Editor-in-Chief**

Congratulations to Michaela Compagno, the new Editor-in-Chief of the Lusher’s student newspaper, the Post-Diluvian. Ms. Compagno, currently a junior at Lusher, succeeds the Post-Diluvian’s inaugural Editor-in-Chief, senior Ben Long. The Post-Diluvian staff put out the first issue of 2008 in February.

### **National Honor Society Induction Ceremony**

Lusher Charter High School has formed a chapter of the National Honor Society, with Ms. Jenna Bowling as Faculty Advisor. The Society’s first induction ceremony was held on Thursday evening, February 21, 2008, following the “tapping” of the new members several weeks earlier.

On Thursday evening, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 25 students were officially inducted into the NHS during a candlelight ceremony. Ms. Bowling was assisted by Mr. White and Ms. Wanner as 21 members of the junior class and 4 members of the senior class were honored:

#### Class of 2009

Alexander Ates, Dalton Bender, Alaina Boothe, Hannah Brower, Michaela Compagno, Chelsea Fortune, Amy Hansen, Geralynn Lane, Emma LeBlanc, James Robert Logan, Meredith Massey, Ryan McPeek, Gabriella Montalvo, Yasmin Mzayek, Marcus Pierre, Tyler Scifres, Yuliya Skurska, Kirsten Wee, Philip Williams, Jason Wong, Brittney Yandle.

#### Class of 2008

Aseel Alnawaiseh, Benjamin Long, Juliet Meeks, Philip Yiannopoulos

## **Scouting Award**

Meryl Hahne, Lusher 6<sup>th</sup> grade student, is the first Lusher Junior Girl Scout to complete all the requirements for the Junior Bronze Award, the highest award in Junior Girl Scouts. She completed the following to earn this award: the Child Care Badge, the Visual Arts Badge, the Sign of the Star, the Sign of the Rainbow, the Junior Aid Award, and a Bronze Service Project, which involved teaching visual arts to about 40 2-year-olds at a local preschool.

## **College Counseling**

### **Senior Class**

Members of the senior class have received admission letters in recent days to:

Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY  
Marymount Manhattan College, New York, NY  
Whittier College, Los Angeles, CA  
School of the Art Institute - Chicago, IL  
Johnson and Wales University, Denver, CO  
University of Washington, Seattle, WA

In addition, several seniors have received Merit Scholarships from Tulane and Loyola.

### **Junior Class**

Junior Class Members and Parents: Mr. Prosser has completed his initial one-on-one conferences with members of the junior class, and he is now ready to begin follow-up meetings with 11th graders and their parents. It is his wish to see each junior with at least one parent by the end of the school year. He is available by appointment before school at 7:30 a.m., during the school day, or after school at 3:45 p.m. To set up an appointment, please call Mr. Prosser at 304-3965, or e-mail him at [charles\\_prosser@luserschool.org](mailto:charles_prosser@luserschool.org).

## **Sports News**

### **Middle School**

Most middle school teams will begin playing in March. The 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade boys' baseball team has 3 players returning from last year—Nick Eckert, Justin Haab, and Will Durante. Coach Steve Volo is being assisted by Ed Cerrone.

### **High School**

The first softball game for High School was Thursday, February 21 at Lusher. There are 14 girls on the team, and there will be 3 home games.

**Message to coaches of all sports: Please send us team news!**

### **Sports Booster Club**

Concession stand for all games: Anne Eckert, with a small cadre of devoted parents, has almost single-handedly staffed the stand for every home athletic event. She needs help. If your child played fall sports, please help Anne out this spring. Contact Anne at [annebilly@bellsouth.net](mailto:annebilly@bellsouth.net) to volunteer. Please consider volunteering for sports when your child is not playing so that parents of current players can watch the game.

### **Fencing**

The Beginners' Fencing Class taught on Tuesday and Friday evenings is making great progress, according to instructor Jonathan Cohen, and is ready to move from the dance studio into the gym, AND to begin using fencing gloves. Intermediate and advanced fencers continue to progress, too. For more information, contact Jonathan Cohen at [dgtiger1@aol.com](mailto:dgtiger1@aol.com).

## ***Upcoming Performances and Exhibitions***

### **Middle School Drama Troupe**

The Drama Troupe is currently rehearsing a one-act play entitled FULL OF SMITH by Susan Chenet. The play is a farce, with a string of over-the-top characters and situations, it takes place in the fictional town of Smithsville, and it tells the story of a small-town girl with big dreams. The show will open Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm, with another performance on Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm. Both performances will take place in Room 109. Admission is free, but donations are greatly appreciated.

### **Choral Program**

Lusher's Middle School and High School choruses will perform in concert on March 18<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm. Each chorus performs a variety of music—classical, folk, world, and contemporary. Instruction focuses on ear training, holding pitch against harmony parts, and basic music theory.

The spring Chorus Concert will take place in the Lion's Gate Theatre. Each chorus will perform separately and, then, as a combined choir.

### **Upcoming Dates**

February 24 – Lusher Strings, Grades K – 12, 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church

March 18 – Lusher Choral Concert, High School and Middle School, Fortier campus

April 10-17 – Dinner Theater Showcase Performances, Fortier campus

May 7 and 9 – Middle School Drama Troupe Performances, Room 109, Fortier campus

May 9 – Visual Arts Exhibition Opening, Fortier Campus

## ***Student Council***

Lusher's Student Council is starting a program to recognize a student of the week. The student recognized would exemplify Lusher's Project Pride rules and would be someone who generally does the right thing without calling attention to himself or herself.

## ***Lusher Arts Guild***

Lusher Arts Guild is a parent group aimed at supporting the arts at Lusher. The Guild is currently in the organizing stage and is looking for parent representatives from each of the arts areas to sit on a by-laws committee. The Guild has representatives from theatre and creative writing, but is looking for parents to represent dance, musical theatre, visual arts, media arts, instrumental music and vocal music.

The group plans to support fundraising and grant writing activities, particularly to support summer study for students at specialized camps or programs. Allyson Brusseau is the parent heading this effort. She can be reached at [lusherartsguild@gmail.com](mailto:lusherartsguild@gmail.com). The group would like to meet before Spring Break. If you are interested in this effort, please contact Allyson.

## ***Crawfish Boil Sponsorships***

The 25th Annual Crawfish Boil will be held on April 5, 2008 on the Fortier campus field. In addition to being a terrific community celebration, this is the PTSA's largest single fundraiser, and Lusher relies on these funds to cover budget shortfalls. Every year we ask our supporters to help underwrite the costs associated with the Crawfish Boil.

Please log on to our website at [www.lusherschool.org](http://www.lusherschool.org) and go to the Support Lusher page. The link will connect you to a secure site where you can donate directly on line. Any amount is appreciated. Alternatively, you can make a check out to the Lusher PTSA and return it to school.

## ***Other News***

### **Hollywood Comes to Fortier**

"Cirque du Freak," based on the popular children's book series authored by Darren Shan, is being filmed in New Orleans, and the Fortier campus will be used for four days of filming of both exterior and interior shots.

### **The Mark A Ratner Chemistry Lab**

Lusher Charter School is honored to announce a gift by the Ratner family for the renovation and refurbishment of the Mark A. Ratner Chemistry Laboratory at the school's Fortier Campus. The gift is being made by the Ratner family in honor of their uncle, Dr. Mark A. Ratner, the Charles E. and Emma H. Morrison Professor in Chemistry

at Northwestern University. Dr. Ratner is widely considered the father of the field of nanotechnology and molecular electronics. Dr. Ratner's spirit of innovation and scholarship will be an inspiration to young scientists at Lusher as they begin to explore the field to which he has dedicated his illustrious career.

### ***Upcoming Program for Parents***

David Alvarez, Prevention Specialist with Metropolitan Human Services of New Orleans, will speak to Lusher Parents on Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm about "The Effects of Substances on the Developing Adolescent Brain".

### ***Summer Arts Intensive***

Lusher's Summer Arts Intensive will run June 2 through 27, 2008 for rising 4th through 12th graders. Classes will be offered in dance, music, creative writing, visual arts, mixed media & film, music, and musical theatre workshop. Applications are available now. Lusher students will be given first priority, but students from the community will also be registering, so get your registration form in early to save your spot.

### ***Upcoming***

For a complete list of upcoming events, please see the Combined Calendar on EDLINE. What follows are some highlights:

#### **Scheduling**

Current 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> graders will begin course scheduling at the end of February. Look for those packets and course descriptions to come home in advance. Please note that course scheduling is a separate process from re-registration, which must also be completed. See below for re-registration date and time.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Exams**

High school exams will be February 29 through March 6. No school March 7<sup>th</sup>. Middle school exams will be March 3 through March 6. No school March 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### **High School iLEAP and GEE Testing**

High school students will take these standardized tests March 10 – 14.

#### **Re-registration**

Re-registration for current 5th through 11th grade students will be held on Wednesday, March 5, 2008 from 8AM to 6PM in the Library at the Fortier campus. The re-registration form came home with each student on Friday, Feb. 29th. A parent or guardian must bring the completed form and provide two proofs of residency for Orleans Parish (both dated within the last 30 days) on re-registration day. Please make copies of these proofs to submit to Lusher, but bring originals as well. Acceptable forms of proof are: utility bill, Sewerage & Water Board bill, current homestead exemption or January 08 tax bill, 2007 W-2 form, current dated lease, and/or dated pay stub including name and

address ( in the name of the parent). The PTSA will collect the assessment fee (or a payment plan) of \$60.00 with a maximum of \$120 per family.

It is critical that students be re-registered on time. Lusher is not able to hold positions for those who do not complete this process. If you have any questions, please call 304-3960.

### **Crawfish Boil**

Our biggest community event and fundraiser will be held on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. This is a must-attend event for all, with great food, games, student performances, and entertainment. **You will be hearing from a Boil representative asking for parents to volunteer on boil day. Please sign-up for as many shifts as you can.**

### **Junior/Senior Prom**

Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, location to be announced.

### **Graduation**

Commencement ceremonies for Lusher's first class of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will be held Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm on the Tulane campus.