

James
River
High School

Rapid News

Volume 18, Issue 1

October, 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| @ Your Library | 3 |
| Counseling | 4-6 |
| Athletics | 7 |
| PTSA | 8 |
| New Staff | 10 |
| Newsmakers | 11 |
| Parent Conferences | 12 |

A New Community of Learners

Dear Parents and Community Partners of James River High School,

We have settled into the 2011-2012 academic session. I have received encouraging feedback from teachers on how well students are meeting and exceeding academic expectations. James River continues to be a thriving, dynamic, and student-centered comprehensive high school where students come first.

We are looking forward to Homecoming and all the time-honored traditions that are associated with the week. The Rapids will face off against Monacan on Friday, October 21. The Homecoming dance will be held on Saturday, October 22. October is a busy month for class activities and academic events.

The PSAT is being administered on Wednesday, October 12, to all 10th grade students. Quality scores on the PSAT allow students to enroll in dual-enrollment courses in their junior and senior years.

Rapid school spirit continues to run deep! We have a superb and very supportive school community. Our teachers are committed to providing rigorous, relevant, and engaging instructional activities that lead to student success and achievement. I know we will maintain our momentum throughout the school year. I want to thank parents and community partners for taking an active role in supporting our school programs and students. It is an honor, and I am proud to serve the James River school community as principal.

Please feel free to contact me at jeff_ellick@ccpsnet.net should you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to hearing from you. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Jeff Ellick

Principal



ParentLink

As you likely know from receiving messages from school, we will utilize the ParentLink messaging system to notify parents of upcoming events and important dates, including emergency information when necessary. Many phone numbers change throughout the year, and we want to make sure that you are receiving information from school. Please make sure that the phone number we have on file for you is accurate. If changes occur, please notify our School Counseling Office at 378-2427.

Absences

If a student is absent from school, he/she should return to school the day following the absence(s) with a note signed by a parent and should present the note to his/her first period teacher. The note should include the date, the student's name, the student's ID number, the date(s) of the absence, and the specific reason for the absence.

Parents do **not** need to call the school to notify us that a student will be absent. (Extended absences should be communicated to the student's school counselor.)

Parents will automatically receive a phone call on the evening of the child's absence with notification that the student had an unexcused absence.

Upon the student's return to school, a determination will be made as to whether the absence is excused/unexcused based on the reason for the absence(s).

Early Dismissals

A student who wishes to leave school before his/her regular dismissal time must bring a note signed by a parent to the attendance office between 7:10 and 7:20 a.m. on the day he/she wishes to be dismissed early. The student's dismissal permit will then be delivered to the student in class prior to his/her requested dismissal time.

At dismissal, students meet their parents in the clinic/attendance office, where parents must come to sign their child out of school. Parents who call to request that a child drive him/herself home or to an appointment must follow the phone call with a fax (School fax: 379-2695), as phone dismissals are not permitted.

Parents are reminded that unless such prior arrangements have been made, due to the nature of O.N.E. lunch, **we will not be able to dismiss/locate students during the lunch hour** (11:40 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.).

Homecoming Help Needed!

WE WANT YOU...to help chaperone the Homecoming Dance on Saturday, October 22. A variety of shift times and duties are available, and we would like to enlist the help of at least 30 parents.

Please contact katherine_ruse@ccpsnet.net to volunteer.

Find It @ Your Library

What's your favorite book? Chances are good that someone has tried to ban it. According to the American Library Association's (ALA) Office for Intellectual Freedom, more than a book a day faces removal from free and open public access in United States schools and libraries.

September 24—October 1 marks the 30th anniversary of the ALA sponsored Banned Books Week, emphasizing the freedom to choose and the freedom to express one's opinion. Banned Books Week celebrates "the freedom to choose or the freedom to express one's opinion even if that opinion might be considered unorthodox or unpopular and stresses the importance of ensuring the availability of those unorthodox or unpopular viewpoints to all who wish to read them. After all, intellectual freedom can exist only where these two essential conditions are met."

The positive message of Banned Books Week is the position taken by the ALA, that free people read freely. German teacher **Dr. Stuart Gapper** threw out a challenge to students as a kick-off to Banned Books Week with the following announcement: "So, students, give your fingers and thumbs a break from all the texting, tweeting, IM'ing and Facebooking, and stop by your James River library to pick up a copy of a previously challenged, restricted or banned book. Choose from classics like *The Color Purple*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Catcher in the Rye*. Or, if you're feeling particularly adventurous, how about *Angus, Thongs, and Full Frontal Snogging?*...or even *The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big, Round Things?*" Thanks to his message, students zeroed in on a creative library display put together by Ann Swiatoviak which featured previously banned and challenged books behind police tape, along with information on the reasons why each book was challenged.

English teachers scheduled time for library orientation, book talks, and checkout for their students. In the first two weeks of school, the library circulation totaled over 500 items, and students continue to discover reading can be fun if they choose reading material that matches their interests. The librarians noted that the freshmen class appears to be comprised of many avid readers.

Social studies classes are busy researching in the library on topics ranging from ancient history to current events. They receive a quick overview of resources and are given time to discover and explore the new databases and begin projects.

In addition to teaching classes, creating new programs, meeting and greeting all freshmen, club

"Everything I need to know about life I've learned by reading banned books."

sponsorships, committee meetings, and community involvement, **Ann Reinke**, **Sue Midkiff**, and **Ann Swiatoviak** work to ensure the library remains a busy center of activity throughout the year.

CCPS purchased a new set of databases this year, and James River High School library purchased additional databases to supplement those supplied by CCPS. All databases come with home access capability. In addition to these valuable tools, many more resources are available through **finditva.com** with a library card from any public library in the state of Virginia.

Please post the following information for year-round home access to the James River High School library databases:

<http://www2.youseemore.com/chesterfields/school.asp?SchoolType=3&SID=5>

This brings you to the home page of the James River High School library. Choose the link for online databases, home access, and the screen presents four choices.

Grolier Online and **Britannica** offer a wealth of encyclopedic information; **eLibrary** covers a wide-range of subjects with a variety of materials including newspapers and magazines from around the world; and **EBSCOhost** is one-stop shopping on virtually any topic. Here you will find Student, Biography, History, Science, and Literature Reference Centers, Consumer Health Complete, Points of View, NoveList, Teacher Resources, and ABC-Clio. Be sure to take note of the subgroups under ABC-Clio. To access from home, use the following: username: student ID number; password: last four digits of the student ID number.

Also, be sure to check out the many electronic resources available through the Chesterfield Public Library, accessible with a public library card number, at <http://library.co.chesterfield.va.us/screens/er.html>.

JRHS library is now open on Tuesday and Wednesday until 5:00 p.m. This is a golden opportunity for your student to receive one-on-one help from a librarian and catch up on assigned work. The input of students, staff, and parents helps us build a better library, and we welcome you @ **your library**.

Ann Reinke
Librarian

News From Counseling and the College & Career Center

College Information Night

James River High School and Monacan High School will co-sponsor the annual "College Information Night" on Tuesday, October 11, 7:00 p.m., at Monacan High School. The program brings together local college admissions officers who participate in a panel discussion followed by an audience question and answer period. Topics for the evening include "The College Search," "Interviews, Essays, and Personal Statements," "The Application and Review Process," "The Financial Aid Process," and "Transitioning from High School and The Role of Parents."

The event promises to be informative, interactive, and fun. Make plans to attend with your student!

College Fair

The annual College Fair for northern Chesterfield County will be held at Manchester High School this fall. This event is scheduled for Sunday, October 30, from 4:30-6:00 p.m. The program is repeated on Monday, October 31, at Thomas Dale High School, from 7:00—8:30 p.m.

Over 100 college admissions and financial aid officers will be in attendance. This is the perfect time to pick up college applications and have your questions answered directly by college admissions officers. College-bound juniors, seniors, and parents are urged to attend!

Scheduling Issues

It seems that at this time of year there is a tremendous bustling of activity surrounding class change requests. This article is an attempt to communicate the administration's position on schedule change deadlines and the reasons for such a guiding policy.

In early spring, counselors visit classes to discuss the scheduling process with all students. Information is shared with parents through newsletters and program planning open house events. The counselors then meet with each student individually to discuss a program of studies for the next year. Graduation requirements, student strengths and weaknesses, student goals, and teacher recommendations are important areas of discussion and consideration before students and parents make a decision on a course of study.

When students received their tentative schedule in the spring, a deadline to change their schedules was set for June 20. This June 20 deadline is an important date for master schedulers. Until that date, students and parents have an opportunity to make schedule changes. After that date, the students, parents, and administration have made commitments for the following year. Students and parents have committed to a course of study that is designed to meet their needs and goals. The administration has made a commitment to develop a sched-

ule and to hire staff to meet the needs of all students.

When developing a master schedule, it is inevitable that some conflicts will occur. When that happens, counselors contact students to try and resolve each conflict. Unfortunately, a small percentage of students may not be able to take an elective and will need to make new choices. This process comes later in the summer after many scheduling changes have been made and the master schedule is finalized.

After the schedule is set and the staff is hired, it becomes extremely difficult to honor class change requests and still be able to maintain the integrity of the master schedule. Classes could easily become overcrowded, creating an environment that is not conducive to learning. So, in order to maintain that integrity and to provide the best environment for learning, the administration has developed a policy of not granting schedule change requests after June 20.

The administration makes every effort to correct mistakes that have been made in scheduling, but we cannot make changes because a student changes his mind or wants to avoid certain teachers. Parents and the school can be powerful allies in teaching students the importance of making good choices and the commitment that needs to be developed in order to be successful.

Thank you for your assistance in this process.

Life After High School

Parents are asked to be aware of group guidance sessions taking place in September and October during which each senior, junior, and sophomore participates in a program called "Life After High School." Each participant receives an updated edition of the school counseling publication to assist students and parents with the important task of transitioning successfully from secondary education to the world beyond these hallowed halls. In addition to the group meetings and informative materials, each senior will meet individually with his or her counselor to make a plan geared toward his/her interests and needs after leaving James River.

Parents, continue to stay involved and aware so that your student can make the best possible decisions. Please note that the "Life After High School" booklets are available on the School Counseling website, located at <http://jrhs.ccpsnet.net>.

Military List

Attention juniors and seniors! In accordance with the section 544 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2002, high schools that receive federal funding must provide to the military a list of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of juniors and seniors who

Counseling continued

are enrolled. Upperclassmen who do not want their names released to the military must notify the Registrar, **Leslie Kalb**, in the School Counseling Office by Wednesday, October 12.

Procedures in Processing College Applications

The following is an explanation of the procedure James River High School follows in processing college applications. Please help your student follow these guidelines to ensure an accurate and expedient process for all.

These procedures are designed to get the appropriate information to the schools of your choice as quickly and efficiently as possible. You need only to follow a few simple steps.

- Complete the necessary paperwork. A Student's Release Form must be completed, and a Request for Transcript Form must also be on file before any transcript can be sent. (Both forms are available in counseling.) **The first official transcript is free, and each subsequent transcript is \$3.00.**
- Request a teacher recommendation, if needed. Be sure to provide the teacher with a stamped, addressed envelope to the school(s) to which you wish the recommendation to be sent.
- Be sure to give any counselor portion of your application to your school counselor **at least three weeks** in advance of deadline dates. The School Counseling Office will mail the counselor's part of the application and the transcript to the school directly.
- Submit your portion of the application online (preferred by most colleges) or mail your portion of the application with the application fee by the deadline date.
- Keep a copy and a record of the materials you sent to the schools to which you are applying.

Let's Begin Right for a Successful School Year

Parents, when the school bell rings early on these fall mornings, don't let the echo of the tardy bell shock you and your student back to reality. Make plans today to ensure that this school year begins in an organized fashion and continues with success in the weeks to come. A few simple steps implemented and enforced early in the school year could become the building blocks for academic success.

The results of exhaustive research produced the following conclusions about student success regarding homework, curfew, and student jobs.

- **Homework:** (1) Homework must be done before students go out. (2) Students should lose privileges if homework is not done. (3) Location where homework is done should be mutually agreed upon by parents and students. (4) There should be no set time for homework each day, but par-

ents should step in if grades decline between marking periods. (5) A lack of planning on the student's part does not constitute an emergency on the parent's part.

- **Curfew for high school students:** (first time shown is for school nights and second time is for weekends) 9th grade: 9:00/11:00 p.m.; 10th grade: 9:30/11:00 p.m.; 11th grade: 9:30/11:00 p.m.; and 12th: 10:00/11:00 p.m. (NOTE: Chesterfield County has an 11:00 p.m. curfew for minors.) Studies recommend that the curfew be extended to 30-45 minutes after school functions conclude.

Welcome to the CCC

James River's Testing and College and Career Center Coordinator (CCC) is **Karen Brown**. Mrs. Brown will coordinate activities for the CCC this year. The Center's mission is to assist students with finding and using college, career, and scholarship information from 7:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. during regular school days. In addition, the CCC will be open during select evening hours for special programs as announced.

The CCC appreciates the significant contributions of the parent volunteers and computer assistants. **If you would like to donate your time and talent, please contact the CCC at 794-6763.**

College Admissions Officer's Visits

Juniors and seniors are encouraged to listen to the announcements and to visit the College and Career Center regularly for the most current information. The list in the CCC is updated daily as colleges make appointments, and it is listed on the school calendar. If you have not activated your Edline account, please do in order to reach the link to the school calendar and receive e-mails on college and career programs.

Scholarship Information

School Counselor **Michele Lawrence** compiles scholarship information monthly in the publication known as the James River Ripple. Students may reference The Ripple in their English 11/12 or US History/US Government class or pick up copies of the publication in the CCC. While visiting the CCC, students are also encouraged to look through 2011-2012 scholarship books and visit financial aid web sites on the Internet (sites are listed in the junior and senior edition of the "Life After High School" booklet).

Check out the James River web site for the Ripple and other scholarship information.

GRASP For Financial Aid

Once again, the James River School Counseling Department is pleased to announce a partnership with

Counseling continued

the Great Aspirations Scholarship Program (GRASP), a non-profit organization dedicated to serving local high school students and their families in their pursuit of financial aid for post-secondary schooling.

GRASP representatives have a wealth of experience and training in the field of post-secondary financial aid planning. Students are encouraged to contact our GRASP representative, **Ronda Zukowsky**, for information and scholarship opportunities. She will be available in the College and Career Center (CCC) each Tuesday from mid-October through April. She will be visiting seniors through US/VA Government classes in the early fall and be available to meet with parents and students on Tuesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Parents are encouraged to call the CCC (794-6763) to schedule an appointment.

SOL Testing

The Fall Writing SOL will be administered during the week of October 17-21. This administration will target new seniors needing verified credits and current juniors and seniors who need to retest for verified credit. Please be reminded that all students must pass the English Writing and English Reading SOL tests in order to qualify for graduation. Please contact your student's school counselor for more information.

PSAT

The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) will be administered on Wednesday, **October 12**, at JRHS. This year ALL sophomores will be administered the test *free of charge* as a means of preparing for future assessments and as a way to learn more about their academic strengths and weaknesses. In addition, all college-bound juniors are encouraged to take the test on October 12, even if the student took the test as a sophomore last year!

Specific information about PSAT registration was shared with juniors during guidance sessions in September, and announcements were also made. The cost for juniors to take the PSAT is \$14. Tickets for the test were

sold during lunch on September 27, 29, and 30. Practice booklets and bulletins were distributed to all sophomores through English classes. Practice booklets and bulletins were distributed to juniors when tickets were purchased in September.

Students must take the test in their junior year to be considered for the National Merit Scholarship Program. Test results will be returned to students in January. Please contact the School Counseling Office if you have questions regarding the PSAT administration.

SAT AND ACT

Juniors are encouraged to take the SAT and/or the ACT at least once during the spring while seniors are asked to research the testing requirements for the colleges of their choice. If seniors are looking to improve their college entrance scores, they should retest in October and/or November. This is encouraged in order to allow time for SAT: Subject Tests to be scheduled for students applying to schools that require one or more of these assessments. Most colleges suggest that seniors complete their testing by the December test date for regular and early admission.

It is important to note that all SAT: Subject Tests are not offered for each test date (for example, the Reading and Listening Test for most world languages is only offered on the November 5 test date). Registration bulletins and practice booklets are available in the School Counseling Office, or students may register online (www.collegeboard.com for SAT's and www.actstudent.org for ACT's). **Please note**—families who need assistance in paying for these admission tests are encouraged to contact their student's school counselor for information on fee-waiver grants.

Please note: Important dates are listed on the school website. Visit <http://jrhs.ccpsnet.net> and click the calendar for school activities.

Edline Information

Edline is a website that parents and students can use to access grades and assignments via the Internet. Teachers will update grades every two to three weeks this year. The updated schedule can be found in your student's planner. The website is www.edline.net. Freshmen were given activation codes during Kick-off Orientation and homeroom on the first day of school. Freshmen parent codes have been mailed home.

Account screen names and passwords remain the same from year to year. If you have questions about your information or do not have a parent code, please email **Jeanine Grabham** at Jeanine_Grabham@ccpsnet.net or call 378-2420. The JRHS administration is looking forward to working with you and your students so that they have a successful year.

Catch the Wave with JRHS Athletics Boosters!

Be a part of our RAPIDLY growing organization! Please visit the JRHS Athletics Boosters website to find membership and volunteer forms at <http://jrhrapids.net>. The JRHS Athletic Boosters organization funds 90% of the student athletic programs, and we rely on folks like you who recognize the need to support our sports programs. We fund athletic field maintenance and repair, transportation to and from events, fees for referees and officials, uniforms, and so much more.

Join today by filling out and returning the membership form. You do not need to have a student athlete to support the JRHS Athletics Boosters! Please consider joining in the many volunteer opportunities by filling out a volunteer form or emailing volunteer@jrhrapids.net.

Thank you for your continued support of JRHS athletics!

Mark Your Calendars

Help Support JRHS Athletics!

Halloween Trick or Trot 5K

October 29, 9:00 a.m., Robious Landing Park, JRHS 5K

Admission is only \$20.00 and includes a T-shirt, food, and a chance to win great prizes. Relay teams are welcome and costumes are strongly encouraged. Registrations may be returned to **Tracy Hamner** or mailed to him at 3700 James River Rd., Midlothian, VA 23113. Please include your name, phone number, address, email, and shirt size (youth m/f, high school m/f, adult m/f). Please make checks payable to James River High School. Questions? Contact **Ann Martin** at AnnM_24@msn.com or **Tracy Hamner** at tracy_hamner@ccpsnet.net.

November 7—JRHS Baseball Golf Tournament

The fourth annual James River Baseball Golf Tournament will be held at the Stonehenge Golf and Country Club. The tournament is a fundraiser for the program, with proceeds going towards field maintenance and up-grades, as well as equipment needs. If anyone is interested in playing in the Captain's Choice Tournament, please contact **Greg Dommissie** at **677-2104** or email gregory_dommissie@ccpsnet.net.

Attention Seniors! Important October Dates!

Wednesday, 10/05/10 Senior Ordering Night, 3:00 – 7:00 p.m., Closed Commons

Thursday, 10/6/10

Friday, 10/7/10 Herff-Jones Representative at JRHS during lunches for senior orders

Friday, 10/15/10 Senior portraits and info sheets due Friday, October 14, to yearbook room 1323 or front office. Portraits should be color, wallet size, tux or drape, neutral gray or blue background, electronic copy (email or CD) or hard copy.

All students: Personalize your yearbook with a nameplate or namestamp at the following site:

www.yearbookordercenter.com

Order #2423

Contact Ms. Sparre, yearbook advisor, with questions at Kinsey_Sparre@ccpsnet.net.

Room 1323 or room 1226

804-378-2420 ext. 4420

Meet the New JRHS Staff!

Social studies teacher **Alex Addison** earned his BA in geography from Mary Washington University and is currently working on his graduate degree. He previously taught at Massaponax High School, Manchester Middle School, and Midlothian High School. This Clover Hill graduate (class of 1997) finds time to run marathons in his spare time.

Dorie Bishop joins the English Department, teaching British literature. She earned her BA and MA from the University of Richmond, and her career credentials include marketing director of an insurance and investment firm. Her latest assignment at Tomahawk Creek Middle School led to her selection as Teacher of the Year. She enjoys reading, shopping, and movies.

Spanish teacher **Erika Cuevas** comes to JRHS from Loudon County Public Schools with a BA degree from Hollins College in Spanish and Political Science. She enjoys yoga, cooking, and exploring new places.

Carol Ann Dickerson is the new Choral Director, and she comes to JRHS from Hanover High School and also taught elementary and middle school music. She earned her BME at VCU in voice and piano. In between all of the competitions and rehearsals with her choral group, she finds time to relax with gardening.

Business and finance teacher **Carolyn Galloway** earned a BS in Science and Business Education and an MED in Administration and Supervision. Though she retired in 2005 after 31 years of teaching, she continues to teach part-time. She enjoys crocheting, fishing, and travel.

A'Leigh Hamner joins JRHS as an MiMD teacher in Special Education. She earned a BA and MA at Mary Baldwin College and is currently working on her MED, also at Mary Baldwin. This is her sixth year of teaching, after teaching in Henrico County and in Michigan. She enjoys cooking and traveling.

Linda Hockaday is the new Office Manager for JRHS. She earned a degree from J. Sargent Reynolds, and her work experience includes 11 years with the Henrico Police Department, seven years at Varina High School, and five years at Powhatan Public Schools. She enjoys gardening and reading.

Laurie Hogan, after nine years as a school counselor at Monacan High School, is the School Counseling Coordinator for JRHS. She earned her BS in Psychology at Longwood University and her Med in Counselor Education at VCU. Her hobbies include running, gardening, and cooking.

Orchestra teacher **Brenda Johnson** earned her BME at VCU. She comes to JRHS with 33 years of experience in CCPS middle and high schools. In addition, she is a violinist and violist in the Richmond Philharmonic and the Petersburg Symphony and freelances at weddings and receptions.

Cameron Koehler, Social Studies SUCCESS teacher, earned his BA from Penn State University, class of 2010. Last year he taught psychology, sociology, and world cultures in Pennsylvania and has just moved to the Richmond area.

Denise Leopard joins JRHS as a Business and Technology Education teacher. She has her BS in Business Administration from Millersville University and her Business and Information Technology Education teaching certificate from Virginia Union University. Before spending the last seven years working with CCPS, she was employed in the accounting field.

Chemistry and biology teacher **Daniel Roberson** earned a BS in Biochemistry and a BA in Biology. Up to this point he has been a student, and therefore this is his first teaching assignment. He loves sports, especially basketball and Frisbee. He also loves music and dance and may be caught looking at sunrises and rainbows.

Jack Smith, part-time Latin teacher, comes to JRHS with a BA in Classics and his MED in Education from the University of Tennessee. He has taught for 11 years, the last six with CCPS. This classicist also enjoys electronics, computer hardware/software, molding and casting parts, scale models (both architectural and real world vehicles), science fiction models, and 3D computer modeling.

Mallory Strittmatter now walks the halls of JRHS as a tenth grade English teacher but not that long ago attended JRHS as a student. She earned her BA and MA at Virginia Tech and started her teaching career in Colorado.

PTSA News

**Join the
JRHS PTSA—
Only \$10.00!**

The PTSA is undertaking a fundraising effort to help our school in areas that have been hit hard by budget cuts. Money raised by the PTSA's **RAPIDS RESCUE** Fundraiser does not require JRHS families to buy or sell any food items or products. We are simply asking that you make a monetary donation. It is hoped that all families will participate. Any amount that you can give will help. If you donate \$50 or more to the **RAPIDS RESCUE** Fundraiser, you will receive a complimentary copy of James River Cooks II.

Purchase a copy of James River Cooks cookbook for \$10. Contact **Judy Deichman** at 378-3738 or email her at judith4125@aol.com for details.

Register your Kroger Plus card NOW! Bring the school code **90473** to your Kroger store or print a copy of the bar code from the JRHS website, on the PTSA link under fundraising. This program runs from September 12 through March 26.

Register your Martin's A+ School Rewards card NOW! To enroll, go to www.martinsaplus.com; enter your 11 digit number found on the back of your Martin's shopping card; enter James River's ID #**03141**. This program runs from October 9 through March 31, but you can register now!

Dine at Qdoba the first Tuesday of the month. Let them know you are with JRHS and buy a drink with your meal! We will have the wheel ready for \$1 a spin. We will also announce this at school and find the dates at the PTSA link on the JRHS website.

Attend Chick-Fil-A afternoons from 2:00—5:00 at the location in front of Lowes. Let them know you are with JRHS. We will have the wheel with great prizes for \$1 a spin. Chick-fil-a dates are as follows: November 15, January 17, February 21, April 1, and May 15.

Please visit the JRHS web page (<http://jrhs.ccpsnet.net>) and click on the PTSA link to find out all of the information on what the PTSA is doing.

There are many ways to get involved, and your support is greatly appreciated!

JRHS Support

The Student Services Team at JRHS includes **Lisa Ebeling**, School Psychologist, and **Peggy Staples**, School Social Worker. We work in close collaboration with educators, parents, and other professionals to encourage a successful school experience for students. We can provide an array of services, which can include counseling, consultation, and evaluation. Please feel free to call or e-mail us with questions or concerns. You can reach Mrs. Ebeling at lisa_ebeling@ccpsnet.net and Mrs. Staples at peggy_staples@ccpsnet.net. We can also be reached at 378-2420, ext. 4142.

If you have mental health and educational questions or topics that you'd like to see addressed through this newsletter, please let us know. We'd love to hear your ideas.

Texting-Driving Awareness Simulator Comes To James River High School

Sponsored by James River High School PTSA and Wells Fargo

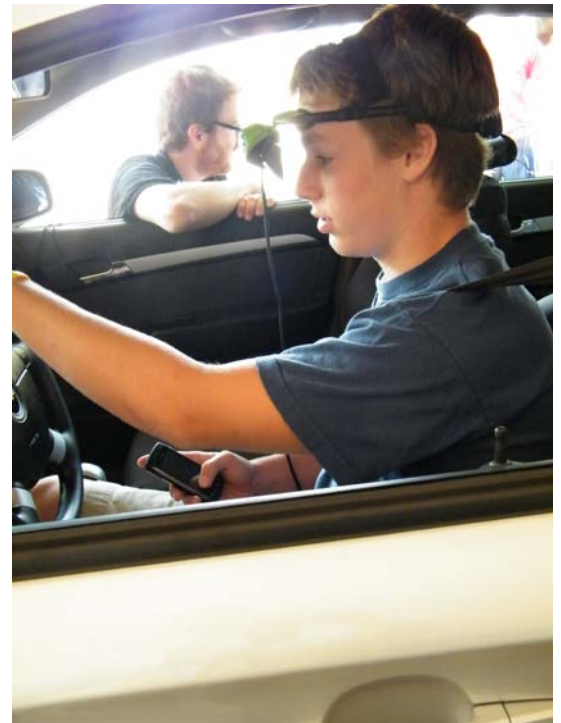
Texting can be more dangerous than alcohol to drivers, and government officials are starting to take notice. Laws are being passed in many states to ban texting while driving, and a large number of PSAs are being broadcast on the Internet and television. Thanks to a partnership between James River High School and an organization called PEER Awareness, the dangers of texting while driving can now be experienced in a safe, controlled environment.

PEER Awareness, a health and wellness company based in Grand Rapids, MI, visited James River High School on September 15 and 16. Students and faculty were introduced to the AWARE-TXT Simulator. This technology allows students to sit in a real car which is suspended and monitored with sensors to simulate real driving. The software renders a virtual field of vision which is visible on a heads-up display worn by the "driver." This software also renders various road conditions, like rain and snow.

Students then experienced the difficulty of texting while driving in a completely safe environment. This allowed students to fully appreciate the dangers without risking their safety. The simulator is becoming a fast favorite among high school and college campuses around the country.

Wells Fargo, which has banking locations in Midlothian, made a donation to help sponsor this event. "As a leading financial institution in our community, we want to join the efforts and help educate young drivers about the dangers of texting and driving," said Tim Butturini, Greater Virginia regional president for Wells Fargo. "We are proud to be a key partner in the communities where our team members and customers live and work."

For more information on PEER Awareness and their AWARE-TXT Simulator, as well as other programs, visit their website at www.peerawareness.com.



NOOKS!

Late last school year, JRHS purchased a class set of color NOOKS. It was the hope that these ereaders would capture the attention of reluctant readers. As the school year drew to a close, word was beginning to get out that students seemed to prefer reading with this new technology.

This school year starts with another class set of NOOKS, the new black-and-white simple touch readers. To date, both sets of ereaders have been used in ELL, English, and sports literature classes with great success. Students, when polled, overwhelmingly express preference to reading in this format. They enjoy the benefits and ease of word definitions, bookmarking, and note-taking with a simple touch of the screen. Teachers are pleased with the positive feedback from their students, and plans are under-way to load more ebooks to support the CCPS curriculum.

Feel free to stop by for a quick lesson in NOOK reading!

Newsmakers

Band director **Keith Cottrill** and his Regiment participated in the Hermitage Classic Band Competition on Saturday, September 24. Out of 30 bands, they received the second highest score of the day. The Regiment took first place in percussion and first place overall. Congratulations, James River High School Regiment!

This past June, Spanish teacher **Patricia Stocks** and Social Studies Department Chair **Shannon Castelo** took nine students to Barcelona and Madrid, Spain. Highlights of the trip included a visit to the Prado museum, flamenco dance class, and show and a visit to the beach in Barcelona. A good time was had by all! (Pictured at left—students on the bench designed by Gaudi at his parc in Barcelona.)



House Majority Leader **Eric Cantor** visited JRHS on September 19. Mr. Cantor has been serving as the United States Representative of Virginia's district since 2001. He addressed the U.S. Government and Politics students in the school theatre on the political process, and a question and answer session followed.

Science teacher **Robert Benway** was selected to receive the Physics Award from the Virginia Association of Science Teachers (VAST). This distinct honor recognizes dedication in the field of Physics Education. The award presentation will be part the annual VAST PDI Conference held at the Hotel Roanoke, November 17-19, 2011. The award consists of an engraved plaque and funds to attend the VAST Professional Development Institute (PDI). Congratulations to Mr. Benway on being selected for this award!

Allie Oyler's theatre students and **Kathleen McDonald's** Shakespeare students will talk a field trip on October 11 to enjoy Henley Street Theatre's presentation of *The Merchant of Venice*.

Award Winning *etcetera!*

English teacher **Allison Marchetti** and Fine Arts teacher **Kelly Bisogno** are proud to announce that the 2011 edition of *etcetera*, the JRHS Literary/Art Magazine, won a Gold Medal Ranking from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA). The magazine earned 963 out of 1000 possible points based on evaluations of organization, literature content, visual content (artwork), and design of the publication. The publication earned "All Columbia Honors" for the Content and Design, **meaning** that it scored at least 95% of possible points. The publication earned perfect scores for the artwork content.

This outstanding ranking is a combination of efforts between the creative writing staff and the art/design staff. Marchetti and Bisogno are so proud of the work their students put into this magazine and plan on repeating this effort again this year.

The publication will now be considered for the CSPA Crown Awards, which chooses the best magazines in the country. The results from this contest will be posted sometime this fall. The magazine is also being critiqued by the Virginia High School League, and the JRHS teachers will receive their rating from them mid-October.

2011 Magazine Staff

Literary Staff: **Andrew Miles** (literary editor), **Mackenzie Campbell** (submissions editor), **Brooke Hyatt**, **Danielle Pedini**, **Dillon Smith**, **Lauren Garofolo**, **Savannah Dutton**, and **Scott Allen**.

Art/Design Staff: **Michael Couchman** (design editor), **Hilary Ament**, **Logan Pierpont**, **Julian Shank**, **Samantha Langston**, and **Jacob Mills**.



3700 James River Road
Midlothian, VA 23113

Office: 804-378-2420

Fax: 804-379-2695

School Counseling: 804-378-2427

Athletics: 804-378-2429

**JAMES RIVER
HIGH SCHOOL**

*A Nationally Recognized
Blue Ribbon School of
Excellence.*

We're on the Web!
jrhs.ccpsnet.net

SCHEDULE A CONFERENCE: Meet Your Child's Teacher!

Monday, November 7, is Parent/Teacher Conference Day from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. If you would like to make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher(s), please call the office on **Monday, October 31, through Friday, November 4, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at 378-2420, extension 4152. Please have your child's teacher's name and/or schedule on hand.

Jeff Ellick
Principal

Kitty Catina
Assistant Principal

Jennifer Coleman
Assistant Principal

Michael Fennessey
Assistant Principal

Amanda Voelker
Assistant Principal

Jeanine Grabham
Dean of Students

Laurie Hogan
Director, School Counseling

Tim Llewellyn
Director, Student Activities



Rapid News is produced monthly and designed with Microsoft Publisher. Submissions should be sent to **Ann Reinke**, newsletter editor, by the fifteenth day of each month. She may be reached by email:

ann_reinke@ccpsnet.net

To receive notice of each new posting *and* late breaking news, please send your email address following the directions on the home page: <http://jrhs.ccpsnet.net>

jrhs.ccpsnet.net