

# FOCUS

Joel Barlow High School PTSA Newsletter

May/June 2011

## Principal's Points



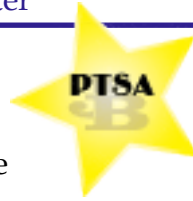
In 1892, poet A.E. Housman wrote the following:

"The pleasures of the intellect are notoriously less vivid than either the pleasures of sense or

the pleasures of the affections; and therefore, especially in the season of youth, the pursuit of knowledge is likely enough to be neglected and lightly esteemed in comparison with other pursuits offering much stronger immediate attractions. But the pleasure of learning and knowing, though not the keenest, is yet the least perishable of pleasures; the least subject to external things, and the play of chance, and the wear of time. And as a prudent man puts money by to serve as a provision for the material wants of his old age, so too he needs to lay up against the end of his days provision for the intellect. As the years go by, comparative values are found to alter: Time, says Sophocles, takes many things which once were pleasures and brings them nearer to pain. In the day when the strong men shall bow themselves, and desire shall fail, it will be a matter of yet more concern than now, whether one can say, 'my mind to me a kingdom is'; and whether the windows of the soul look out upon a broad and delightful landscape, or facing nothing but a brick wall."

At this time in the school year, after the budget has been passed and before the year winds up, in addition to shepherding our students through the end of their year at Barlow we are

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## Jottings From Jen

With a nod to David Letterman, I happily submit the following:

### My Top Ten Favorite Moments as PTSA President This Year:



#10: Checking in over 300 people for the *Race To Nowhere* movie screening in February

#9: Nibbling an out-of-this-world mini cheesecake, one of the few leftovers at the beautiful and bountiful Faculty Appreciation Luncheon in January (...can't wait for the one in June!)

#8: Sitting in on the Post Prom's planning sessions with some of the community's most talented, creative forces as they plan to transform cinderblock walls into a Hollywood sound stage

#7: Opening envelopes in response to the PTSA's first ever Non-Event Fundraiser - we made over \$2000!

#6: Approving all of the faculty's Mini-Grant requests, including the permanent installation of the extraordinary Diego Rivera mural for a Spanish classroom

#5: Flipping thru the new and improved Buzz Book

#4: Moderating the panel of savvy moms as they candidly shared their triumphs and missteps during the "The College Process:

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## Principal's Points (continued from page 1)

also interviewing candidates for teaching positions. At job fairs and colleges, as we seek out new teachers we are looking for that passion for life-long pleasure in intellectual achievement.

I know you are worried about the alphabet soup of college applications: Did my child do well on the CMT, CAPT, ACT, SAT, and AP? Is my child's GPA high enough? Will we have an appropriate FAFSA and SAR when we apply for financial aid? Yikes!

Your child is wonderful, a living, breathing, fascinating, (annoying,) terrific accomplishment. Help him or her find anything into which he

or she can invest passion and excitement. Share your own key interests, and if you pause and think to yourself, "Gee, all I seem to do is work and worry!" perhaps you can take the entire family out to a dairy for ice cream and just enjoy each others' company.

For all of our technological accomplishments, books are still wireless and practically free. Give yourself the pleasure of an hour at Mark Twain or Easton Library.

— *Tom McMorran,  
Head of School*

### ***Do You Know SPSS (PASW)?***

Tom McMorran, our Head of School, is working on his dissertation to fulfill requirements for the degree of doctor of education at Seton Hall University.

He is looking for help from anyone who is familiar with SPSS (PAWS) statistical analysis software. If you are able to help, please contact him at [tmmorran@region9ps.org](mailto:tmmorran@region9ps.org).

## Jen's Jottings (continued from page 1)

Unplugged" Program held as part of the March 8 PTSA meeting

#3: Sharing tears of appreciation with the Smuniewski family at the funeral reception we hosted in honor of Barlow's beloved senior, Rob.

#2: Hearing the voting results the night the Region 9 budget passed!

### **And the #1 Favorite Moment as PTSA President This Year...**

Receiving this email: "You should feel great about the flourishing PTSA!"

Indeed we are flourishing, because of the dedicated interest and support of a growing number of Barlow families. To those faithful PTSA troopers (I hope you know who you are!) THANK YOU!

And to anyone who has yet to attend a meeting or volunteer an hour or two - we'll roll out the red carpet for you in September!

— *Jen Wastrom,  
PTSA President*

### ***Last PTSA Meeting***

Don't miss the last PTSA meeting of the year on Tuesday, June 14.

## Post Prom This Friday, May 13

The Uber-Creative Post Prom team is hard at work putting the finishing touches on: "Friday The 13th (of May) - A Magical Night At The Movies."

They've got their "eye" on the details to make this night a success for the junior and seniors attending the Prom; an Avatar room is one of the venues they are working to create.

This event has traditionally provided a safe, entertaining and memorable place for the

kids to come after their prom. But the party has recently grown in size and scope; with the creative talents of a devoted team at the helm, the venue now exceeds that of the Prom itself. The Post Prom at Joel Barlow High School is high-end-set-design-meets-professional-party-planner...mixed with the spirit and energy of about 400 kids. It's magical, alright.



*Pictured here (L to R):  
Tina Nocum, Alice Smith,  
Candy Wood McAdam, Kim Ryan,  
Mary Bottero, Ian Cieplik,  
Wanda Augustyn, Joni Johns,  
Tegan Conlon*

## Stop & Shop

Do you shop at Stop & Stop? You can earn cash for JBHS. Due to the generosity of Stop & Shop, a portion of the cost of your groceries can be awarded to Joel Barlow High School for educational needs. For more information, see the flyer on the home page of the Barlow website. You do need to register for this program each year.

### Waivers

Parent must fill out a waiver for their child and return to the JBHS main office by Thursday, May 12 if their child wants to attend Post Prom.

Forms can be picked up at the JBHS main office or downloaded here: <http://www.joelbarlowps.org/Communications/PTSA/PostProm2011/PromWaiver.pdf>.

### Contributions

It costs about \$50 per person to run Post Prom - and it is

entirely free to juniors and seniors. To offset some of these costs, we welcome (and desperately need) contributions from parents. Please consider making a donation to this event. Checks (in any amount) should be made out to JBHS Post Prom and turned in with the waiver.

### Chaperones

Parent chaperones are a very important part of Post Prom - we need many adults to help throughout the evening. If anyone is available to volunteer even an hour of your time in the wee hours of Friday May

13, into the early morning of Saturday May 14, the committee would be so grateful. Your children will not even see you! Contact [joeydavey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joeydavey@sbcglobal.net) if you can help

### Volunteers Still Needed:

Food Servers - contact Kim Ryan at [kimct@hotmail.com](mailto:kimct@hotmail.com)

Door Chaperones - contact Joey Davey at [joeydavey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joeydavey@sbcglobal.net)

Clean-up Crew (starting at 10 AM Saturday May 14 - contact [joeydavey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joeydavey@sbcglobal.net)

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## Post Prom (continued from page 3)

### Decorations

The decorating committee is looking for:

- Loan of whimsical/colorful dining chairs
- Loan of Mr./Mrs. Potato Heads, Slinkys, and other Toy Story items
- Loan of ladders
- Drivers who can help pick up

and drop off decorating items

Please contact Mary Bottero at [mbottero@aol.com](mailto:mbottero@aol.com) if you can help.

We are also seeking Chinese Auction items, such as:

- iPad
- flat screen TV
- digital camera

- laptop

- cash donations or gift cards to purchase one of these items

If any families are willing to combine efforts to purchase one of the larger gifts mentioned above that would be a huge help to our committee!

### Food Drive

Morgan Jordan, a Barlow junior, is organizing a nonperishable food drive for the Bridgeport Rescue Mission starting Monday, May 16.

Nonperishable food items are accepted including:

- jarred pasta sauce
- boxed pasta
- boxed mac n' cheese
- bagged or boxed rice
- canned fruits and vegetables
- canned soup

- canned beans
- cereal
- oatmeal
- stuffing mix
- cans of tuna fish

Donation boxes are located in the main lobby at Barlow.

All items will be donated to the Bridgeport Rescue Mission.

### *Staff Luncheon*

The PTSA will host a JBHS Staff Luncheon on June 16, 12 - 3 PM, in the cafeteria.

Details will be sent out on the PTSA listserv soon looking for volunteers.

### Voting Results for May 3

On May 3, all budgets passed for Easton, Redding and Region 9. The Boards of Education wish to express their appreciation for the support of the Easton and Redding communities.

The results are as follows:

Easton Budget:

Yes - 790

No - 403

Redding Budget:

Yes - 707

No - 497

Region 9 Budget:

Easton: Yes - 753; No - 439

Redding: Yes - 708; No - 496

## Achieving With Integrity Committee

### *Joel Barlow's Integrity Committee Spotlights National Honesty Day*

The Achieving With Integrity Committee (AWIC) at Joel Barlow High School promotes academic engagement and honesty within the student community. But that's a tall order in today's emphasis-on-achievement culture, where 85% of college students surveyed report having cheated in high school (Science Daily, August 2009). So, in an effort to bring new attention to their basic message, the AWIC created a month-long comprehensive campaign to embrace honesty at Barlow.

During the month of April, the AWIC promoted honesty with several creative activities, all leading up to a celebration of national honesty day on April 30.

The Achieving With Integrity Committee at Joel Barlow was formed in 2009 as part of a statewide initiative. It is led by faculty member Catherine Correa and parent volunteers Paula Schwear and Jamie

Prusak. Barlow's AWIC's first initiative, a campaign called "Got Integrity?", was launched in May 2009. This promotion went on to win the "Special Project Award" in the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education's 2009 Awards of Excellence for Educational Communication Contest.

The AWIC efforts are still going strong, although their initial grant money has run out. They welcome donations; checks made payable to JBHS can be sent to the attention of Catherine Correa at Joel Barlow High School, 100 Black Rock Turnpike, Redding, CT 06896.

"Our committee focuses on spreading the message that we should have integrity each and every day, and having integrity comes with the responsibility of doing the right thing," said AWIC member Andy Kearney, a freshman. "By promoting honesty within our school community during honesty month, we are teaching our students that telling the truth is the right thing to do. I've always wanted people to be

honest with me, no matter what the situation, and as a result of the committee's efforts, that same principle can apply to the entire school." On the front door of the Joel Barlow High School there is a professional-looking poster which states, simply, "Honesty is not just the best policy, it's our Code."



*Pictured here (L to R): Andrew Kearney, Sam Schwear, Paula Schwear, Mary Atkinson, Catherine Correa, Max Schwear, and Jamie Prusak*

*Photo by Jen Wastrom*

## Easton Learning Foundation

The Easton Learning Foundation's annual Trivia Bee is Thursday,

May 19, 7-9 PM.

For more information about ELF and these events, go to [www.](http://www.eastonlearningfoundation.org)

[eastonlearningfoundation.org](http://eastonlearningfoundation.org).

## Reflections

PTSA Reflections Program: something to think about over the summer!

Thank you to all students who participated in this year's competition. I hope you will consider participating again next year. The theme for the 2011-2012 Reflections Program is "DIVERSITY IS ..."

Entries are not due until next school year, but you can work on your piece during the

summer and complete it at any time before the due date.

Reflections is a program in which students may enter a theme-based piece of work in one of six arts categories. The categories are Literature, Photography, Musical Composition, Dance, Film, and Visual Arts.

Entries are judged at the local level by professionals in the field associated with the work

entered. First place winners move on to the State Level and potentially the National Level of the competition.

To learn more about the National PTA's Reflections Program, please visit [www.PTAreflections.org](http://www.PTAreflections.org), or contact Claire-Anne Meskers at [meskers@optonline.net](mailto:meskers@optonline.net).

## Register Now for the RES 5K

The RES 5K Raccoon Fun Run and Walk is May 28 this year. Continuing a great tradition at RES, where the community gathers to compete, get a little exercise and have fun, the 5K will be held the Saturday morning of Memorial Day Weekend. Over the years, more than a thousand runners and walkers have traversed the course, which goes from RES on Route 107 to Great Oak to Old Stagecoach to Gallows Hill and back to RES. Walkers start at 8:45, runners at 9:00 AM.

The race is officially timed; the 1st place adult male and female finishers, and the 1st place youth male and female finishers receive running shoes from Kilometers of Ridgefield.

The entry fee is \$20 per participant if received by May 20 (\$25 after). Registration includes a t-shirt for all pre-registered participants and other gifts, courtesy of local sponsors. AND, all pre-registered participants are invited to the fantastic pasta party the night before, held at

the West Redding Firehouse.

The party includes great pizza and pasta, ice cream and live music by The Music Shed (a local Redding youth band) and Louder Daddy!

To get the registration form, go to the RES website at [www.reddingelementaryps.org](http://www.reddingelementaryps.org) and click on RES PTA. You can also contact us directly at [RESPTA5K@gmail.com](mailto:RESPTA5K@gmail.com). Register now!



## About This Newsletter

The FOCUS newsletter is a bimonthly publication of the JBHS PTSA. Email notification is sent to those who have registered to receive information from the PTSA. We welcome submissions from the JBHS community. Previous issues of the FOCUS can be found on the JBHS website at [www.joelbarlowps.org/Communications/PTSA/Focus.html](http://www.joelbarlowps.org/Communications/PTSA/Focus.html).

## *As You Like It*

Don't miss Barlow's upcoming production of "As You Like It" on May 20, 21, and 22. See more details at <http://www.joelbarlowps.org/StudentActivities/AsYouLikeIt/AsYouLikeItTicketForm.pdf>.

THE HERMES ART SERIES OF THE MARK TWAIN LIBRARY  
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& TYGER MACNEAL

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IN A LIVELY, FUN AND INFORMATIVE  
AFTERNOON!



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## Mikey's Way

Joel Barlow High School and the Bridgeport Bluefish will "Take a Swing" at cancer for Mikey's Way Foundation with a June 11th game to benefit hospitalized children. (See more information at <http://mikeysway.charityhappenings.org>.)

After one of the most brutal winters on record, spring is particularly welcoming this year. And what better way to celebrate the season? Take a trip out to a ballgame! On Saturday, June 11, the Bridgeport Bluefish will take to the field at Harbor Yard for a game that is of particular importance to the Joel Barlow High School community. Tickets to that game will be sold to benefit the Mikey's Way Foundation. The ticket price is \$15, \$5 of which will be donated directly to Mikey's Way Foundation to benefit pediatric cancer patients throughout our area.

Barlow students will be selling the tickets, which go on sale March 15th.

The organizers of this event hope to continue work being done in honor of Barlow graduate Michael "Mikey" Friedman. Some members of the junior class are already hard at work creating advertising for the event.

Michael "Mikey" Friedman, who graduated Barlow in 2007, started the Mikey's Way Foundation in 2005 after being diagnosed with a rare and often fatal pediatric cancer. During his 4-½ year battle Mikey realized the strong connection between the mind and body. Calling on his own experiences, Mikey knew that a patient's physical health could be greatly affected by their mental well-being. Using his "wish" from the Make-A-Wish foundation, Mikey, purchased thousands of



dollars worth of electronics. He took these gifts to his local pediatric hospital and, while meeting with each child, gave it all away; helping children connect with family and friends, and to divert their attention away from the endless hours of treatment they must endure. In a word, he helped them escape...Mikey's Way.

**Contact: Les Friedman**

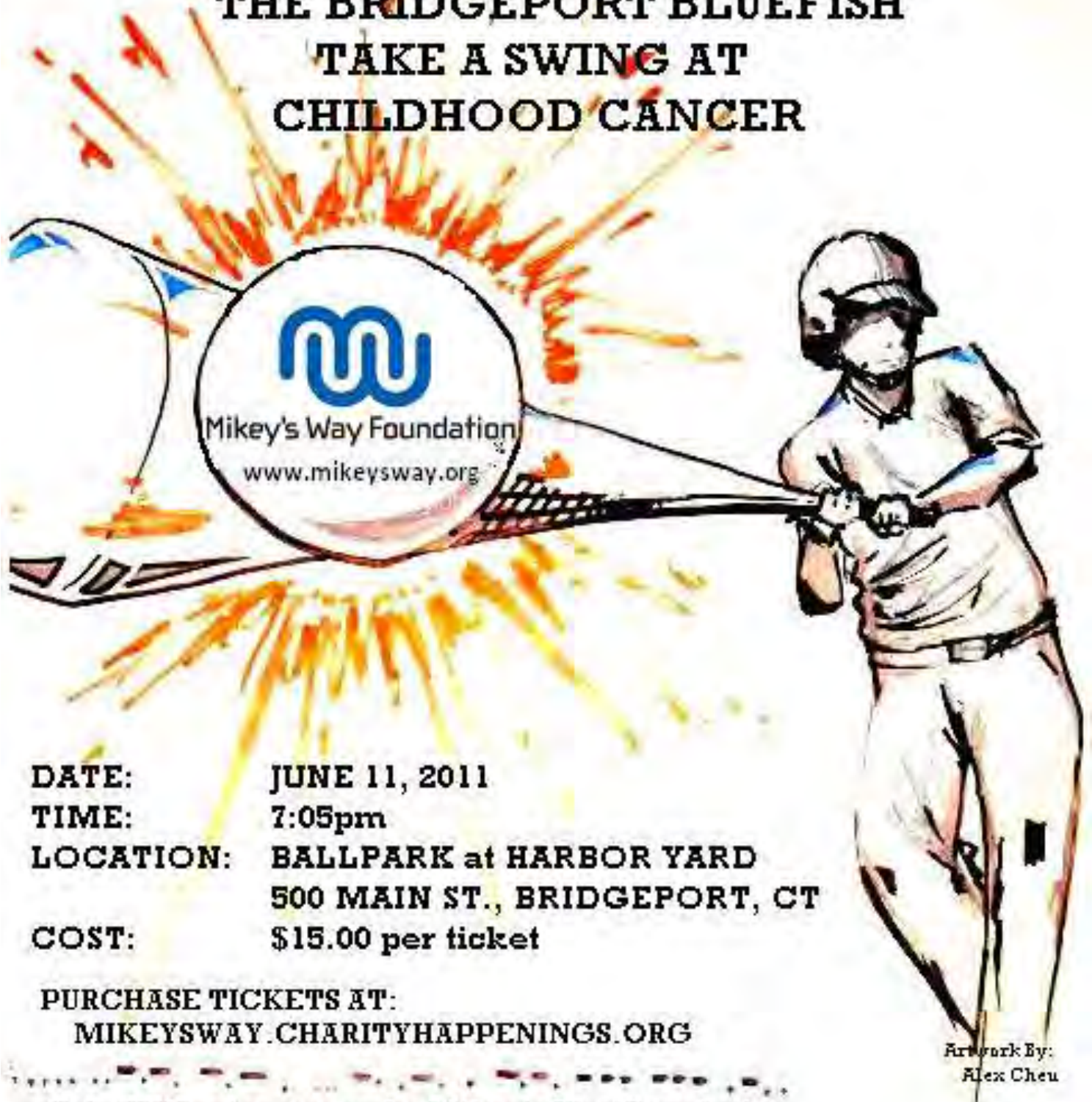
**Mikey's Way Foundation**

**191 Post Road West**

**Westport, CT 06880**

**203 221-2754**

**JOEL BARLOW HIGH SCHOOL  
and  
THE BRIDGEPORT BLUEFISH  
TAKE A SWING AT  
CHILDHOOD CANCER**



**DATE:** JUNE 11, 2011  
**TIME:** 7:05pm  
**LOCATION:** BALLPARK at HARBOR YARD  
500 MAIN ST., BRIDGEPORT, CT  
**COST:** \$15.00 per ticket

**PURCHASE TICKETS AT:**  
**MIKEYSWAY.CHARITYHAPPENINGS.ORG**

Artwork By:  
Alex Cheu

**Help JBHS raise money for Mikey's Way Foundation  
and let's help kids cope...Mikey's Way**