



Reflections

EDWIN O. SMITH FOUNDATION

WINTER 2011 NEWSLETTER

PRINCIPAL'S LETTER: Greetings to all E. O. Smith Alumni and Friends!

On behalf of the staff and student body, I would like to let you know about the exciting programs and accomplishments we are currently celebrating. As you are aware, we recently celebrated our 50 year anniversary. Now, three years later, we continue to celebrate the people and ideas that make E. O. Smith a special place.

As just one example of our excellence, our boys' soccer program has a rich tradition of success stories. For over thirty years, the person behind much of it is our coach, John Blomstrann. Although a program's success is commonly defined by wins and losses, state championships, and conference titles, these results tell only a small part of the story. John was named the 2011 National Coach of the Year by the National Soccer Coaches Association - a recognition he has earned through his dedication to the program, players, and E. O. Smith. John was recently honored at a

Region 19 Board of Education ceremony and as expected, he immediately deflected any credit for the program's success to his players and fellow coaches. We would expect nothing different from him.

As another example of excellence in our school, we are aware that making college affordable today is a struggle for most families. Understanding this, we continue to do our part in supporting the desires of our students and their families to continue their educational interests at the collegiate level by creating opportunities through articulation agreements with three local institutions. We currently offer courses from Manchester Community College (12) and the University of Connecticut (20) and will begin an articulation with Eastern Connecticut State University (9) in the fall of 2012. Students have the opportunity to begin building a college transcript early while taking courses that receive high school credit as well.

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Music And Drama Productions Outgrow Performance Facilities

Hairspray,”“Urinetown,”“Pippin,” band concerts, choral concerts, chamber concerts, senior drama projects. Where do you go to see all of these? E. O. Smith, of course! In fact, over one third of the student body participates in music or drama programs, and the number grows each year with new course offerings and an increasing participation in after school productions.

However, you might be disappointed once in the auditorium. All of these productions depend on sound, and the quality of the sound in this space is abysmal - “demoralizing for kids” - as both the strings and band teachers noted. In a perfect world, the school could build a larger space with appropriate lighting and sound. However, in the absence of funds for such a large project, drama and music hope to work on adjusting the acoustics so that the sound quality is not backwards – a whisper in the back can be heard on stage, but a whisper on the stage is heard only by those nearest. This would encourage the strings ensembles to give their concerts in the auditorium rather than seeking other community venues (e.g. the Storrs Congregational Church). Students would no longer be surprised at how good they are, as often happens when they sing at other concert halls or schools.

Another difficulty is focusing the lighting on the stage without risking life and limb. There are currently two front-of-house lights which are extremely dangerous to access. As Christian Schirmer, a junior on the drama tech. crew noted: “[we] would so appreciate the purchase of two Right Arms (by Apollo) and two gel mixers for the lights, which would allow us to focus lights to anywhere we need them, plus add color, without having to climb a ladder 50 feet in the air.” Buying and installing remote control fixtures would remedy this problem, but they are prohibitively expensive at around \$2,000 each. Once again, the Foundation has an

opportunity to help fund programs that affect a large number of students. Donations specified for the auditorium will go towards renovation of the acoustics and the lighting, including an initial assessment by a professional and then implementation as quickly as possible of the recommendations in order to bring the auditorium up to concert quality. (Funds matched by the Foundation, along with ATHLETICS and TECHNOLOGY, up to \$25,000 total.)



String ensemble
bass players.



Top: Hairspray February 2011
Above: Shakespeare in H'Wood
Right: Mr. EOS

Kindles, iPads, 4G . . . But Still A Ways To Go

Smart boards, graphing calculators, Kindles, iPads, laptops and, of course, desk-top computers are some of the most visible aspects of technology at E. O. Smith. Technology can be a means to expand the learning environment as well as to add instructional flexibility, independent of time (on-line learning) and location (think Skype). Coordinating the needs and wants of students and staff can be difficult, particularly given the support needed for the integration and maintenance of technology. Often invisible to the public, such support is multifaceted and absolutely essential to ensuring the smooth functioning of digital technology at both the main campus and the Depot campus. Thus, while students and staff at the school have access to many different technologies, it is not always possible to have them available for all learning environments - due both to the cost of the material and the on-going maintenance. Instruction is of course, one of the top priorities when making decisions about what to bring into the school. Initial steps include evaluation regarding the feasibility of the technology.

According to Jan Poland, the IT Director, budgeting constraints often prevent E. O. Smith from moving forward in adoption of newer technologies in comparison with other schools in the region. Frequently a pilot study is needed, and that is where the Foundation plays a strong role. Many of the teacher grants awarded the past four years have been for implementation of new or for increased support of existing technology, including computers for the language lab, graphing calculators for math classes, and software for music and art. Teachers are beginning to rely on the Foundation's annual grants as a reliable means to enhance the student learning experience. To continue offering this support beyond the teacher grants, the Foundation Board has agreed to match donations specified for TECHNOLOGY (along with ATHLETIC facilities and the AUDITORIUM) up to \$25,000 total. This is an excellent opportunity to show your support for the high school.



Kindle in the LMC.



Math students enjoying graphing calculators.



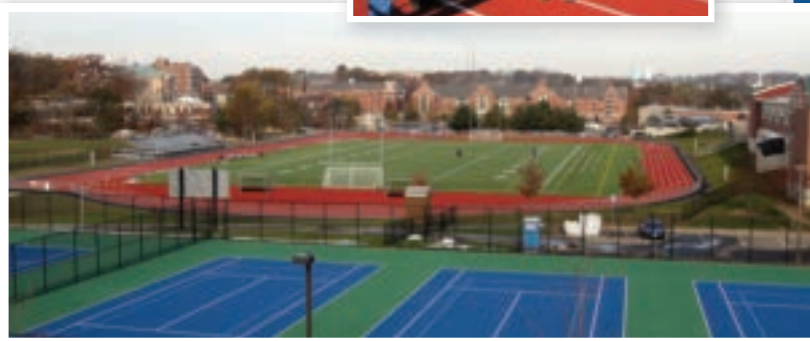
New Outdoor Facilities Need Some Finishing Touches

“It’s awesome – no more mud! And we can use spikes or tennis shoes.” Such is the reaction of a number of students when on the newly renovated field behind the school. As many of you know, the track as well as the field and the tennis courts finally got a much needed renovation - thanks to a recent \$2.1 million bond passed by the district’s three towns. Athletics – whether in gym classes, intramurals or one of 28 team sports – continue to be popular at E. O. Smith. According to Athletic Director Steve Robichaud, over 50% of the student body participates in an after-school team sport, and many of these athletes can be found in the weight rooms preparing for the next season. Almost all EOS varsity teams continue to be among the top teams in their division or in the state. As this newsletter goes to press, volleyball, swimming, cross country (girls and boys), and soccer (girls and boys) expect to be playing in their respective state fall tournaments. Despite these wonderful renovations, other areas of need remain including two in particular – dugouts for softball and lights for the field.

Opening of renovated track and field October 28, 2011: Bob Kremer, Denise Merrill, Greg Haddad, Bill Ryan, Betsy Paterson (with scissors), Christina Mailhos, Fran Archambault, Janice Chamberlain, Matt Hart.



John Brvenik (senior) and Josh Burns (tennis court) admire the new color. Note the fencing which was paid by a grant from the American Tennis Association through Mansfield Recreation.



EOS weight room.

Teacher Awards

The Edwin O. Smith Foundation annually reviews competitive grant proposals from teachers and staff to support projects that fall outside the school budget. Awards are given to proposals that the Foundation believes will increase teaching effectiveness through technology or other tools -- especially projects supporting scholarly or experiential merit or other forms of student accomplishment. In 2011, the EOS Foundation provided approximately \$25,000 to teacher grants (award recipients are listed below).

Jon Swanson (science teacher) received funds for a "Greening the Coral" project that provides hands-on science opportunities and teaches students about conservation.

Robert Pirrie (science teacher) received funds for a biodiesel fuel project in analytical chemistry (supported in collaboration with the UCONN Center for Environmental Sciences and Engineering).

Mike DiStefano (athletic trainer) received funds to support an additional trainer to help students learn proper exercise and weight-lifting techniques.

Shawn Santasiere and Armand Saccomanno (social studies teachers) received funds to support the annual Bike to School Week.

Dan Bochicchio (math teacher) received funds to support the annual Connecticut Math Team Competition, to be held at E.O.S.

Alan Trotochaud (science teacher) received funds to purchase new astronomy textbooks.

Heather Bunnell (art teacher) received funds to purchase a large screen and a color laser printer for her classroom.

Pam Gutierrez (culinary teacher) received funding for iPads to assist in culinary instruction.

Lynda Lombard, Carla Ryall, Alan Nassar and Kaitlyn Harris (math teachers) received funds to purchase graphing calculators.

In addition to teacher grants, the E.O. Smith Foundation also provides student scholarships. Among the 2011 graduating class, awards went to: Ryan Schoeplein (Herbert J. Segar Scholarship), Claire Nelson (VFW Scholarship), and Deric Zhang (Jack Cohen Scholarship).



Jon Swanson and student experimenting in class with DNA.

Pam Gutierrez with culinary uniforms and storage unit



PANTHERPALOOZA

On Saturday May 14, 2011, the Edwin O. Smith Foundation hosted a fundraiser at The Sports Bar in North Windham, CT. This benefit featured live music by EO Smith graduates, a local DJ, a wandering magician, a full dinner from the grill, and late night pizza! Hors d'oeuvres and treats were also provided and served by members of the EOS culinary program (Pam Gutierrez, head). A great time was had by all, including those who bid on live and silent auctions.

Nearly 30 local sponsors donated to support Pantherpalooza (see right), and over 150 businesses and community members aided with the donation of items and services for auction. With ticket sales, total fund raising for the event was nearly \$25,000 – enough to support next years' 2012 Teacher Grant Awards!

Pantherpalooza 2011 Sponsors: Mansfield OB-GYN, Mission Control, Northeast Emergency Medical Specialists, Wilcox & Reynolds Ins., Sports Medicine & Orthopedic Surgery, CT Oral Maxillofacial Surgery Center, Storrs Endodontics, Storrs Family Dentistry, Ferrigno, Realtors,

Tony's Garage, Mansfield Family Practice, First Niagra, Tammy Arute, Computer Rescue, Angellino's Restaurant, David A. Kloss, MD FACS, Allstate Insurance, Christine Potts, Robin Weeks D.M.D., Charles & Lisa Eaton Family, Storrs Family Medicine, Storrs Center Alliance, Mansfield Pediatrics, Sam Schragger, The Wooden Spoon Restaurant, James & Pat Raynor, Avalon Hair Spa, and Tedeschi Food Mart.



Observer at auction. Photo credit, Meghan Moore/MansfieldPatch.com.



Spencer Hamlin and Chuck Eaton. Photo credit, Meghan Moore/MansfieldPatch.com.

Message from the Chair - November 2011

In 2005 a group of E. O. Smith graduates, current and former E. O. Smith parents and area residents met to discuss how they might fund worthy and creative initiatives, activities and programs at E. O. Smith that could not be funded in other ways. After much discussion, we decided to create the Edwin O. Smith Foundation, a non-profit 501 (c) (3), to serve that purpose. In the few short years of our existence, we have made great progress toward meeting our goal.

Organizations like ours owe their success to the support of large numbers of faithful alumni and friends, and we are certainly no exception. You have helped us by attending our events, including the Red and Black Balls and Pantherpaloozas, by supporting these events with gifts and contributions of various kinds, and by contributing financially through our appeals. We appreciate greatly your support and contributions, and we are grateful for the trust you have put in us to steward your money well.

Your contributions, along with the significant gift given by Ray Sidney and described in a previous newsletter, have enabled us to support a variety of initiatives, including our Teacher Grants Program. Through June 30, 2011, we have contributed over \$130,000 to E. O. Smith. In addition, we are growing an endowment that will allow us to sustain our support for the school well into the future. Our goal is to have an endowment of \$1,000,000 within the next seven years. Through the work of our talented investment committee and the valuable advice we are getting from our financial advisors, we are well on our way to achieving this goal. In fact, as of June 30, 2011, we had \$505,568 in endowed funds.

Of course, we also plan to continue to support the school while growing this endowment, and with your help we know we will be able to do so. We have allocated \$25,000 of Ray Sidney's gift as matching funds in the hopes that this will encourage you to support three meritorious initiatives that have gone underfunded. The initiatives include funding for technology, for the auditorium and for athletics, as described elsewhere in this newsletter. We hope you agree that these projects are in need of and worthy of your support. If you would rather contribute to the annual fund than participate in the matching program, please feel free to indicate that on the pledge form included in this newsletter.

Thank you again for helping us make the Edwin O. Smith Foundation such an important part of our learning community. And thank you for your continued support of our initiatives.

Fran Archambault

Foundation Hires First Executive Director

Nancy Silander, a long-time teacher and department head who recently retired, is the new Executive Director of the Edwin O. Smith Foundation. The board wanted an individual to work on fund-raising as well as communication to better achieve the mission of the organization in promoting opportunity and excellence for all students. Nancy served on the Foundation Board as the teacher representative for four years, and worked on the Red and Black Ball Committee as well as the Pantherpaloozas. "This offers me another way to give back to an institution that I am passionate about," she said recently. She will also be one of the Region 19 school board members from Mansfield beginning in December.

FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS

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Richard Schwab

Cheyenne Shaffer

Larry Sidney

Jeffrey Smith

Special thanks to newsletter editors Holly Fitch, Melissa Bray, and Kathy Ryan-Gidman.

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We are thrilled to have a new track, multi-purpose field and tennis courts for our students and the EOS community to use. This state of the art facility will allow our physical education classes to spend more time outside and conduct classes on safe and durable surfaces. We must thank the taxpayers for their support of this facility upgrade that will benefit thousands of children for years to come. In order to make full use of a synthetic multi-purpose surface for school and community events, we envision completing the lighting system so that the field can be used more efficiently.

Performance art has always been a cornerstone of E. O. Smith. The Fine Arts department continues to produce accomplished musicians and actors who receive regional, state, and national recognition for their talents and accomplishments. The chorus, instrumental music ensembles, and thespians have performed for audiences across the nation and have earned many distinguished honors. The success of these programs can be defined in ways other than individual and group recognition. Although our performing arts programs are much celebrated, this success has placed a tremendous strain on our school auditorium. As these programs expand, the auditorium is in constant demand and in need of essential upgrades if we are going to continue to provide the highest quality experience that

our students deserve. To do this, renovations to the lighting and sound systems in the auditorium are needed. As is the case with the athletic fields, we view our auditorium as a venue that provides the community with a place to learn and develop their passion.

While acknowledging the many fine accomplishments of our school, we do have some remaining areas of need where programmatic support from the Edwin O. Smith Foundation has and can continue to make a difference. These areas include Technology, Athletics, and the Auditorium. With this newsletter, we are asking you to consider an additional donation that will support continuing excellence for EOS students by contributing to these three areas of need. I thank each of you for your continued support of our students, staff and our school. A strong alumni network is essential in keeping the traditions we feel are important. For more information about our school, we encourage you to visit our school web site at www.eosmith.org and to register with the alumni network. It is our sincere hope you join us in celebrating our legacy and be a part of our bright future.

Louis F. DeLoreto, Principal

You may send in a donation by check or go via the web @ www.eosmithfoundation.org.

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr. Mr. & Mrs. I wish to remain anonymous

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