

LHMS PTA NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Aug 25 – Teacher
breakfast

Aug 27, 3:30-5:30pm –
“New to Hughes” Open
House

Sep 1 – LABOR DAY
(holiday)

Sep 11, 7pm – PTA
meeting

Sep 15-19 – Fall Book
Fair

Sep 17, 7pm – Back to
School Night + evening
book fair hours

Sep 19 – Bulb orders
due

Oct 3 – 1st quarter
interims mailed to
parents

Oct 9, 6:30pm – PTA
meeting + “Math
Night”

Oct 13 – School
holiday

Oct 15-16 Life Touch
Fall photos

Oct 16 – Reflections
entries due

Oct 17 – Skate Night
spirit event at Skate
Quest

Dear Langston Hughes Middle School Parents and Families,

The LHMS PTA wishes to welcome all our new and returning families. We look forward to a rewarding and challenging academic year!

As ever, the primary goals of the LHMS PTA are to **facilitate communication between parents and the school, increase parent/family involvement in the school, and encourage school excellence**. This year the LHMS PTA will organize and execute a number of exciting initiatives to include:

- Parent workshops and Principal chats.
- Student recognition programs such as BUG (Bringing Up Grades), Langston Hughes Stars, and academic honor roll breakfasts.
- Hospitality events for Hughes families and staff, to include staff recognition events and award ceremony receptions.
- Community service projects and opportunities.
- Cultural and arts programs, to include Multicultural Fair, poetry slam & contest, PTA Reflections program, and the annual student art exhibit at the U.S. Geological Survey.
- School community/spirit events such as Skate Nights, Dining for Dollars at local restaurants, and the annual student/faculty basketball game against Herndon Middle School
- In-school support – providing parent assistance for special events like Career Day, Touch Base Day and Back to School Night

Another key mission of the PTA is to **keep parents informed of “Hughes happenings” throughout the year**. If you want to be “in the know,” here’s how!

- Read our **PTA newsletter** – included in the bi-monthly Hughes News newsletter and also posted on the PTA website. You will receive a Keep in Touch message each time a new edition of the PTA newsletter is available.
- Check out the **PTA website** at www.lhmspta.com or click on the link on the LHMS website. The website includes information about PTA activities, upcoming events and volunteer opportunities and is updated regularly throughout the year
- Receive **PTA Weekly Updates** sent via **Keep In Touch**, an automated email service.
- Use your **Student Directory**, which contains student contact information as well as school/staff information and a student handbook. The directory will be distributed (one per family) sometime during the fall. Extra copies can be ordered on the Green One-Stop-Shopping form.

In addition to these activities, the PTA **provides funding for a variety of important school enrichment activities**, to include field trips, staff development, team awards, student subsidies, teacher mini-grants, student recognition programs, and eighth grade celebration, Fall Fun Run, Multicultural Fair, Team Celebration Day and the Student Directory... To raise money for these worthy undertakings we sponsor a number of fundraisers throughout the year - please give them your support!

- **PTA membership** drive (our primary source of funding - *every* family should join the PTA!)
- **Invest in Hughes** (donations made to LHMS PTA). This money will provide for much needed equipment for LHMS. Such as calculators and computer equipment throughout the school. This investment will improve LHMS for all the students.
- **Panther merchandise** sales – T-shirts, hooded sweatshirts, pins, LHMS Panther car magnets
- **Merchant discount card** sales – we offer Panther Discount cards (good for discounts at 9 local restaurants) and Crest Drycleaner discount cards (good for over \$100 in savings) for sale
- Bulb Sales
- Events such as the annual **Basketball game** against Herndon Middle School and **Skate Nights**
- **Dining for Dollars** at local restaurants
- **Merchant rebate programs** offered by retailers such as Giant, Safeway, Harris Teeter, Target and the General Mills Box tops 4 Education program. Also, please designate LHMS when you make any Office Depot purchases.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE LHMS PTA!

- **Become a member!** Join the PTA and attend meetings – we need your ideas and input to make our school better!
- **Volunteer for something!** Review & return the Volunteer Opportunity Form included in this mailing. We have involved jobs for people with energy ... but we also have jobs that require only a 1-2hr commitment for those who want to help but are short on time. Find out more about specific jobs by contacting our volunteer coordinator at volunteercoordinator@lhmspta.com.
- **Attend the first PTA meeting of the year – Thursday, Sep 11 at 7pm.** The focus of this meeting will be welcoming new families to Hughes and discussing opportunities for parents to be involved in helping Hughes during the coming year.
- **Attend PTA meetings throughout the year** - Generally the second Thursday of the month at 7:00pm in the LHMS library/media center (check the PTA newsletter or website for actual dates). Some meetings will be preceded at 6:30pm by workshops, Principal Chats or special receptions for students involved in PTA sponsored activities.

Welcome and looking forward to a great year at Langston Hughes.

Show your Panther Pride and Get Involved!

Yolanda Maldonado

PTA President

president@lhmspta.com



**Attention: 8th grade families OR
high school students in need of
community service hours:**

OPEN HOUSE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The “New to Hughes” Open House will
be held
Wednesday, 27 August
3:30-5:30pm

Volunteers are needed from
2:30-6:00 p.m. to hand out flyers to
arriving families, staff the PTA table,
and sell Hughes spirit wear and
merchandise.

**Meet & greet our rising 7th grade
families and help get their school
year off to a great start!**

If you can help for all or part of the
event, please contact Yolanda
Maldonado at president@lhmspta.com

DID YOU KNOW...

Hughes students performed
9000+ hours of community
service during the
07-08 school year?

REMINDER:

**Update your calendar with
these important dates for
the coming school year!**

PTA Meeting Schedule:

- **Sep 11, 2008.** PTA meeting + Welcome, new Hughes families!
- **Oct 9, 2008.** PTA meeting + “Math Night” – meet the Math department and learn more about middle & high school math curriculum, courses & sequencing (standard, advanced & IB)
- **Nov 13, 2008.** PTA meeting + “Principal Chat & Chew” – your chance to chat with Ms. Monticchio
- **Dec 11, 2008.** Executive board meeting only.
- **Jan 8, 2009.** PTA meeting + “Language Arts Night” – meet the Language Arts department and learn more about the language arts curriculum
- **Feb 12, 2009.** PTA meeting + “Preparing for High School” - presentation and Q&A with Bruce Butler, principal, South Lakes H.S.
- **Mar 12, 2009.** PTA meeting + “Principal Chat & Chew” – your chance to chat with Ms. Monticchio
- **Apr 16, 2009.** PTA meeting + Reception for Reflections contest winners
- **May 14, 2009.** PTA meeting + Reception for poetry contest winners
- **Jun 11, 2009.** Final PTA meeting of the school year + PTA Turnover

*Meetings begin at 7pm. Receptions,
workshops or other activities generally
begin at 6:30pm. Check the latest issue
of the PTA newsletter for updated
information.*

*Remember, your Hughes experience is
only 2 years long, so you can't afford to*

WHY YOUR PTA MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Jeanette Thomas, Hughes teacher
& PTA Vice President

Research show that there is a dramatic drop-off in the number of parents who continue to support their child's PTA after elementary school. These same studies suggest a widespread perception that once students have moved on to middle school, the efforts of the PTA become less important.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Middle school is a critical formative stage in a student's life. It is a time when students explore new ideas, new interests, new friends and new social roles. A time when students begin to expand beyond the boundaries of their textbooks to understand the relevance of what they are learning to their school, their community, and their world.

The Hughes PTA plays an important role in encouraging our students to do just that. Through activities like Multicultural Fair, students are encouraged to learn more about

the world in which they live. Through activities like Poetry Slam and Reflections, they are encouraged to explore their creativity. Through PTA-sponsored community service opportunities, they are encouraged to participate as members of their community. Through activities like Skate Night and the Hughes v. Herndon Basketball Game, students are encouraged to learn more about the diverse student body of which they are a part.

PTA-funded mini-grants permit teachers to acquire resources – such as cameras, software, electronics & publishing services - that make learning active, engaging & fun. PTA-funded initiatives purchase the benches, plants & artwork that make our school an engaging & attractive place to learn. And PTA-funded scholarships ensure that no child is ever left behind due to financial constraints.

Please support the Hughes PTA and help us help all our students make the most of their middle school years. Become a PTA member, volunteer to support one of our many activities, and/or make your voice heard at our monthly PTA meetings. Your ideas and support make us strong!

Earn CASH for our school with Box Tops 4 Education!!

Clip box tops from your favorite General Mills products and **deposit them in the Box Tops 4 Education Collection Box in the Media Center.**

You may also go online at boxtops4education.com and enter sweepstakes, shop online at your favorite retail stores, download cost-saving coupons or discover great recipes.

It's easy ... it's efficient ... it's FREE MONEY for our school!

Please help support Hughes by turning in your box tops throughout the year!



**Purchase your
LHMS stuff in time
for the new school
year & show your
PANTHER PRIDE!**



**LHMS Tee-shirts
\$12 (S, M, L, XL, XXL)**

**LHMS Sweatshirts
\$25 (S, M, L, XL)
\$28 (XXL)**

**LHMS Car Magnets
\$5**

***Order by using the
One Stop Shopping
form (cash/check) or
our online Click &
Pledge system
(credit).***

***Or ... pick up your
items at the PTA
table at Open House
or Back to School
Night!***

THE WAYS TO THE MEANS

By Laura Fyfe, PTA VP Ways & Means (Fundraising)

Welcome to all our new and returning LHSM families! I am excited to be in charge of Ways & Means (fundraising) for the coming year, because I know that the money we raise goes towards making our students' middle school experience the best it can be!

This year we are offering **2 convenient ways to join the PTA, donate to Invest in Hughes, purchase Hughes spirit wear or any of our valuable discount cards.** Both allow you to pay for all your PTA purchases in one easy transaction – no more writer's cramp from writing out all those checks!

- **Pay by CHECK OR CASH using our convenient One Stop Shopping form** (aka "green form"). Copies will be included in the August school mailing or can be downloaded from the PTA website at www.lhmspta.com. Completed forms can be dropped off in the front office.
- Or, **pay by CREDIT CARD using our online Click & Pledge* system**, accessible via the Click & Pledge link on the PTA website at www.lhmspta.com. (*An extra 5% fee will be added to credit card purchases to cover handling charges.)

I am particularly excited about the following developments:

- This year's **Panther discount card** offers cash-back at some of the area's most popular restaurants, including Dominoes & Dairy Queen. This \$10 card can pay for itself in as little as 2 visits!
- Our newly revamped **Invest in Hughes program** will be collecting funds to purchase much-needed technology resources for the school, to include calculators, computers and more
- Our **LHMS tee-shirts** this year will feature the NEW Hughes logo designed by Hughes students last year. It's "fierce"!
- We will once again be offering **Hughes sweatshirts** – the perfect outerwear for chilly fall & winter afternoons
- ... And don't forget to show off your school pride to the community by purchasing a **Hughes car magnet!**

We have so many exciting events & activities planned for the year, but we rely on your contributions to help us fund all the cool things that we do. Thank you in advance for supporting our fundraising efforts in the coming year!

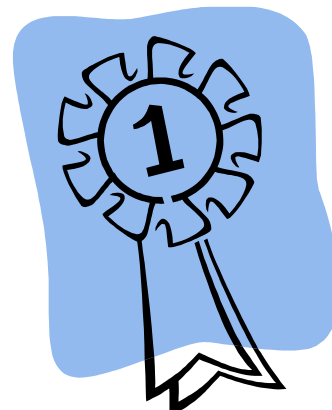
INTRODUCING OUR 2008-2009 PTA Committee Chairs!

Activity Committee Chairs

- Art Show Diana Hirshfeld
- Beautification Catherine Linberg
- Book Fair Megan Maslouhi, Juli Westfall
- Bulletin Board Tena Page
- Community Service Dawn Dzurilla
- County Council Rep _____
- Diversity Academic Achievement _____
- Eight Grade Celebration Kelly Kroll
- Email Administrator (KIT) Jeanette Thomas
- Hispanic Outreach Maria Reguerin
- Hospitality Claire Cyncynates, Sara McAlpine
- Model Campus Representative Elysa Katz
- Multicultural Fair (PTA Liaison) Anya Avilov
- New to Hughes Teacher Welcome Pat Buteux
- Outside Message Board Dawn Dzurilla
- Panther Field Day (PTA Liaison) _____
- Poetry Contest Amy Shaw, Cindy McBride
- PTA Membership Ronnie Levine
- PTA Newsletter Jeanette Thomas
- Publicity & Photography Jeanette Thomas, Annabella Vagonis
- Reflections Kate Herndon
- Special Education Liaison Mary Nell Clark
- Student Directory Shannon Hill, Maureen Becker
- Student Directory Advertising _____
- Student Recognition (Stars & B.U.G.) Bettina Brunner, Cindy McBride
- Superintendent's Parent Advisory Board Meetings John Moriarty
- Teacher Mini-Grants Kelly Kroll
- Website Administrator Melissa Swift
- Volunteer Coordinator Sheryl Cosing

Fundraising Committee Chairs

- Basketball Game Eric Smith, Jeanette Thomas
- Box Tops for Education Christine Stout
- Bulb Sale Mary Lueker
- Dining for Dollars Kristine Mayo
- Grocery & Merchant Rebate programs Tara Allen
- Invest in Hughes Sheryl Cosing, Julie Powanski
- Panther Discount Cart Kathleen Herron
- Panther Field Day Concessions Sara McAlpine
- Pizza Wednesday Tricia Graves, Kim Shoop
- Skate Nights Juli Westfall, Diana Hirshfeld
- Spiritwear Sales Sue Horn



Please join us in thanking these generous individuals for stepping up to organize and support our PTA activities in the coming year!

See a name you recognize? Join a committee and help out! Many hands make light work!

To sign up to support any of the following activities (or to fill one of our remaining open positions), please fill out and return the Volunteer Form (aka "pink form") included in the August mailer.

Want to learn more about volunteer opportunities at LHMS? Contact our volunteer coordinator at

volunteercoordinator@lhmspta.com

JOIN SLPAG!

The South Lakes Pyramid Advisory Group (“SPLAG”) was formed over the summer to provide members of the South Lakes pyramid an opportunity to exchange information and work cooperatively to foster the health of the entire pyramid.

How can sharing information help our pyramid?

- Monitor, assess and address differences in technology programs between pyramid schools
- Promote opportunities to participate in academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs offered by pyramid schools and community organizations (e.g. youth sports, theater, arts, community events)
- Share ideas for events, fundraisers and other activities
- Cross-promote shows, concerts, fairs/festivals and volunteer opportunities

SLPAG welcomes all members of the SLHS Pyramid community – parents and guardians (past, present & future), children and neighbors – to participate in SLPAG discussions, meetings and activities.

To join SLPAG and participate in the SLPAG discussion group, register at southlakesPAG@yahoo.com. Or, if you are interested in being the SLPAG liaison for your school, please contact one of our SLPAG co-chairs, Sheryl Cosing (scosing@yahoo.com) or Grace Cole-Alston (gracus@aol.com). Any questions/comments can be addressed to either of the SLPAG co-chairs or the SLPAG Outreach chair John Moran (moranged@comcast.net).

Funny acronym ... great opportunity!

Members of the South Lakes Pyramid (Cluster 8)

High School: South Lakes
Middle School: Hughes, Rachel Carson
Elementary Schools: Dogwood, Floris, Forest Edge, Fox Mill, Hunters Woods, Lake Anne, Sunrise Valley, Terraset

UNLEASH YOUR TALENTS!

Participate in the PTA Reflections program!

The 2008-2009
Reflections theme is:

"WOW!"

Create an original piece of artwork
in one of six categories:

- Musical composition
- Dance choreography
- Film/video production
- Literature
- Visual arts
- Photography

Complete entry packets will be
available at the Open House and in
the LHMS Office.

Questions? Contact Kate Herndon
at reflections@lhmspta.com.

**Deadline for submissions:
Oct 16**

PANTHER PETE'S FAQs

A monthly column dedicated to answering parent questions.

Dear Panther Pete -

I never seem to know what's going on at school. Yet I know other parents who seem to know everything. How do they do it? How can I be one of "those" parents?

- Clueless in Reston

Dear Clueless,

I've heard rumors about "those" parents – including one that they possess mysterious psychic powers, and another that they strap their children to kitchen chairs and interrogate them until they tell all. I prefer to believe that there's nothing supernatural or inhumane going on: instead, "those" parents simply understand the importance of doing the following:

- **Read Those Weekly Keep In Touch Messages!** This year Keep In Touch (KIT) – an automated email delivery system - will be LHMS's #1 tool for delivering timely information & updates on school activities, events, & announcements. There will be changes to how KIT is managed this year, however, so be sure to stay tuned for information on how to update your subscription information.
- **Read Hughes News & PTA Newsletter,** cover to cover. Most folks don't realize how much useful information is contained in articles that don't seem, at first glance, to be particularly relevant or critical. But if you read everything, you *will* learn what's going on at the school, updates on academic initiatives, what various clubs, organizations & the PTA are up to - even team-by-team updates on what material your child is covering in their various classes.
- **Visit the LHMS & PTA Website.** Here you will find archived copies of the Hughes News, the most up-to-date version of the school calendar, faculty phone & email

information, IBMYP information & links and lots more.

- **Attend PTA Meetings, Workshops & Principal "Chat & Chews."** I know – weeknight evenings are chaotic, and some of the topics of discussion will be of more interest than others. But PTA meetings, parent workshops & principal "Chat & Chews" are where school events get shaped and discussed, school policies are explained and explored, and new initiatives are identified. Don't keep those nagging questions & great "if only they would ..." suggestions to yourself – share them with other PTA parents, teachers and administrators so they can benefit everyone!
- **Be a PTA Volunteer.** Experience the power of being "in the loop"! No matter how busy you are (even if all you can spare is one afternoon or evening the whole school year), the PTA can suggest a way for you to be involved – just ask any PTA officer to provide recommendations.
- **Attend school events.** Join us for Back to School Night, Touch Base Day, and Multicultural Fair. Attend concerts & theater performances. Enjoy family events such as the USGS Art Show and our annual student/faculty basketball game against cross-town rival Herndon Middle School. Be there or be ... well, clueless!

Sincerely,



Dear Panther Pete –

Back in elementary school my child used to bring home a packet of flyers once a week. I understand this doesn't happen in middle school. If not, then how do you communicate this sort of information to parents?

- Flier-Happy in Reston

Dear Flyer-Happy,

Kitchen tables of the world – rejoice! No longer must you endure the indignity of buried beneath piles of school fliers every week. LHMS does away with flyers by communicating this sort of information in a variety of other ways (see my response to Clueless, above). The school may have to send flyers home on occasion, but this should occur only infrequently.

Sincerely,



Dear Panther Pete -

I understand that all middle school students must fulfill a community service requirement. What is the requirement & how do we keep track of community service hours?

- Good Citizen

Dear Good Citizen,

One requirement of the IBMYP program is that students perform 25 hours of community service during the school year. (All students at LHMS participate in the IBMYP program.) This requirement can be met through either individual community service or team-based community service. Some teams organize community service activities throughout the school year. However, students are encouraged to pursue community service projects outside the school too. Hughes students completed over 8,000 hours of individual service last year – an amazing accomplishment!

A list of past community service examples will be provided to students at the beginning of the school year. As opportunities arise throughout the year, they will be advertised on the Morning News, and will be posted on the LHMS website and on the IBMYP bulleting board in the Hall of Nations. However, students should feel free to pursue community service activities on their own – they can check with their Humanities (social studies) teacher to determine if the activity

qualifies as service. Projects do not need to be approved in advance, but do need to be signed off by a supervising adult.

To track their community service hours, students should use the “Individual Record of Community Service Form” located in their Daily Activity Book (DAB) or the Student Directory.

Sincerely,



*Do you have a question for Panther Pete?
Send your questions to
ptanewsletter@lhmspta.com for a timely
response.*

DID YOU KNOW...

Some clubs offered at Hughes last year included:

- Anime Club
- Basketball
- Book Club
- B.O.N.D. (Brothers of a New Direction)
- Cheerleading
- Cooking Club
- Earth Force Club
- Global Outreach Club
- Hermanas
- Journalism
- Needlecraft Club
- Photography
- Science Club
- Soccer
- Step Team (Women & Men)

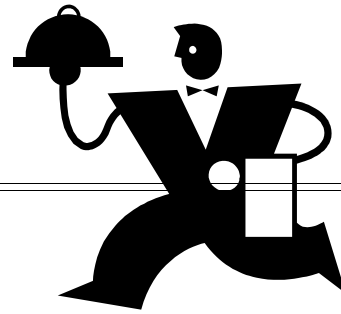
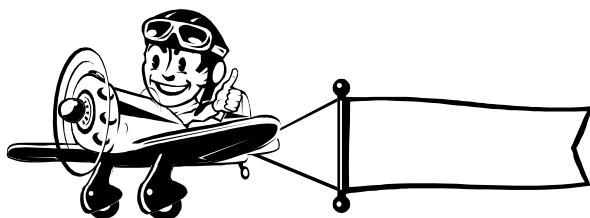
There's Still Time to Place an Advertisement in the 2008-2009 LHMS STUDENT DIRECTORY!

Do you work for a business that would like to raise their profile by advertising to the families of the 900+ students who attend LHMS?

Would you like to place a personal advertisement wishing LHMS students (or perhaps one particular student) good luck in the coming year?

The 2008-2009 Student Directory is accepting advertisements now through September 19, 2008. Ads range from \$40 for a 1/3rd page ad to \$120 for a full page ad.

To order an ad, fill out & return the "yellow form" enclosed in the August mailing. OR, contact our directory ad chair at directoryads@lhmspta.com to learn more about advertising in the 2008-2009 LHMS Student Directory.



Many thanks to the local restaurants who are supporting our fundraising efforts by participating in the **Panther Merchant Discount Card** program!

*Buffalo Wing Factory & Pub
Cheng's Oriental Restaurant
Charlie Chiang's Restaurant
Dairy Queen
Domino's Pizza
House of Mandarin
Lakeside Inn
Lucia's Italian Ristorante
Taco Bell
Tortilla Factory*

For one low price (\$10) you can enjoy discounts from all these great restaurants through September 2009! The card can be used over and over again.

Order a Panther Discount card via the PTA One Stop Shopping form or Click & Pledge.

Cards will also be on sale at Open House and Back to School Night.

Purchase yours right away to start enjoying your discounts now!

NOMINATE A HUGHES STAR TODAY!

“But march ever forward, breaking down bars. /Look ever upward at the sun and the stars.” – The Negro Mother, Langston Hughes

Let these words of Langston Hughes inspire you to nominate a child to be a Hughes Star! Throughout the year we will be posting brightly colored stars in the front hall highlighting the many and diverse achievements of our students.

What makes a child a star? Anything from participation in athletics, academics or the arts; to accomplishments in conjunction with clubs, activities or organizations; to involvement in activities in support of family, neighborhood, or community.

Our goal by the end of the school year is to have every Langston Hughes student represented by at least one star.

So whether you are a teacher, a staff member, or a parent – don’t wait! Nominate a LHMS student TODAY for something they did over the summer or since the school year began by filling out the attached nomination form and returning it to the front office or sending the information in an email to stars@lhmspta.com.

Thanks in advance for helping us showcase the achievements of our extraordinary students!

HUGHES STARS NOMINATION	
	<p><i>(student name)</i></p>
	<p>in recognition of _____</p>
	<p>_____</p>
	<p>_____</p>
	<p>_____</p>
	<p><i>(describe achievement here)</i></p>
	<p><i>[Example: John Cooper, in recognition of his participation on the RLL Nationals All-Star Team this summer]</i></p>
	<p><i>[Example: Anya Gardi, in recognition of her participation in the 2007 Walk for Life walk-a-thon for breast cancer]</i></p>
	<p><i>[Example: Shantea Marks, in recognition of his generosity in helping an elderly neighbor with yard work]</i></p>
	<p>_____</p>
	<p><i>(Your name & relationship to student)</i></p>



DID YOU KNOW ...?

Every year, 8th grade Hughes civics students participate in a project coordinated by George Mason University and the National Archives to collect and record historical information about our community?



By Yolanda Maldonado, PTA President

- Our PTA **officers and committee chairs** that have been busy over the summer planning for the upcoming year.
- Our PTA **Executive Board** for coming up with a working budget for the 2008-2009 academic year.
- Our tireless **Collators**, both parents and students, who helped assemble this mailer. (Hope those paper cuts are healing!)
- Our **Hospitality Committee chairs & volunteers**, who are planning a delicious “Welcome Back!” continental breakfast for our teachers on August 25th. A special thanks to everyone planning to donate food & goodies!
- Our **Directory and Directory Advertising Committees**, who are feverishly entering data and soliciting directory advertising,
- Everyone who completes their pink **PTA volunteer** form and plans to help with PTA /school activities and events. Please turn in your forms to the front office at Open House or during the first few weeks of school.
- All of you **who join the PTA** and plan to attend monthly PTA meetings. We need your ideas to help make our school better!

**LHMS's
08-09 PTA EXECUTIVE
BOARD**

Yolanda Maldonado
President
president@lhmspta.com

Jeanette Thomas
VP Communications
vpcommunications@lhmspta.com

Laura Fyfe
**VP Ways & Means
(Fundraising)**
waysandmeans@lhmspta.com

Jody Wolfe
Treasurer
treasurer@lhmspta.com

Monica Russ
Secretary
secretary@lhmspta.com

**Newsletter
Submissions:**

The PTA Newsletter is published once per month in coordination with the Hughes News.

SUBMISSIONS: Articles or article ideas should be submitted electronically to
ptanewsletter@lhmspta.com

DEADLINES: In general, the deadline for each month's edition is 5 business days after the previous month's PTA meeting. Actual deadlines will be announced at each month's PTA meeting.