



BRIARGROVE BUZZ

Issue 5, January 2012

www.bgroadrunners.org

Important Dates

- January 10 Tour of Grady's New School Facility 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM
- January 11 12:30 PM EARLY DISMISSAL!
- January 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
SCHOOL CLOSED
- January 27 2nd Grade to celebrate Chinese New Year!

Everybody is Somebody at Briargrove!!!

BG Elementary Auction Party invitation coming to your home mailbox soon!
Mark your calendars for:

**Saturday, February 25, 2012 7:00 p.m.
Firehouse Saloon**

Dinner, dancing, silent and live auction. We need your help! Find out how you can participate on page 2. Read on for more information on the PTO's largest annual fundraiser.



SHOW YOUR SCHOOL SPIRIT

Visit the school store online for lots of great T-Shirts to wear on BG Spirit Fridays. Recent shipment of sweatshirts and check out our newest edition, the BG hoodie!

Mark your calendars for the 2012 Auction! “EVERYBODY’S SOMEBODY AT BRIARGROVE!”

This year's auction will include:

- Grade level theme baskets!
- Raffle with great prizes! American Express gift card for \$500! Spa gift card! Ipad!
- Awesome silent auction and live auction! Prizes too numerous to list here!
- Great teacher parties, kid parties, and grown-up parties!
- A photo booth and other fun games and prizes!

The Auction Committee Is Looking For Your Help!

Do you have any ideas for parties?

Would you join a group to host a party – for either kids or adults?

Neighborhood Parties, Grade-Level Parties, Mother/Daughter (or Son) Parties, or
Father/Son (or Daughter) Parties?

Can you donate any items to be sold at the auction?

Trips, Hunts, Vacation Homes? Tickets to Sporting Events?

Gifts, Professional Services, Artwork, or Jewelry?

DONATION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 1, 2012*

*to be printed in the catalog

FEBRUARY 25, 2012 AT THE FIREHOUSE SALOON

For questions or ideas about parties,
please email:

PARENT/KID PARTY CONTACTS

Catherine Cagle
catherinehcagle@yahoo.com

Amanda Gonzalez
amandabuksnys@yahoo.com

For questions about donated items,
please email:

2012 AUCTION CHAIRS

Felicia Beaver
fgonzalez932002@yahoo.com

Leah Eknoyan
leknoyan@comcast.net

RAFFLE

In conjunction with this year's Auction, we are offering a raffle and asking the students to sell raffle tickets to help raise money for the school. A booklet of \$5 raffle tickets will be distributed in your child's Wednesday folder later this month. The students will be encouraged to sell the raffle tickets with their parent's permission. Funds raised go to the PTO. Raffle prizes include an iPad, a \$500 American Express gift card, and a \$250 gift certificate to Fiori Spa. There will be prizes for the students and classes who sell the most raffle tickets. The tickets can be returned to school if you do not wish for your child to participate. If you would like extra tickets, email Beth Richey at skierbeth@aol.com with your requested amount.

BUZZWORTHY NEWS & MORE



WE NEED MORE HELP!

- FRONT OFFICE
- LIBRARY
- NURSES CLINIC
- CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT

FRONT OFFICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to answer phones and assist the front office staff. Shifts are approximately two hours, and each volunteer is needed one or two times a month. Please contact Mariana Cypher at marianacypher@yahoo.com

LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: It's a flexible 1-2 hour commitment a week. Keeping our library organized allows our kids to easily find exactly what book they are looking for! We need your help! If you are interested please contact Silvia Ascione silvia.houston@gmail.com or Mayie Lira mayiehidalgo@hotmail.com

NURSES CLINIC: We need volunteers to help from 8:00-10:00 AM and from 2:00-3:00 PM. Contact PTO President Aimee Verheek if you would like to help out.

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT: Please volunteer whenever you can! These programs are so valuable to our kids! Contact Christina Manero at christinamanero@gmail.com

BG DINING FOR DOLLARS IN JANUARY:

Mark your calendars for January Dining For Dollars- **Villagio's - 5777 San Felipe (713) 974-1111** Monday, January 30th for Lunch and/or Dinner. Villagio's will give BG 20% of all purchases for the day!"

VALENTUNES COMING SOON!

On Tuesday, February 14th, join us for some fun singing and dancing for the kids! Practice dates and times coming soon!

GARDENING AT BG:

The Edible Schoolyard is thriving! The seeds planted in mid November have taken root and the growth is exciting to observe. The K-2 kids will be in the garden and prepping what they harvest to eat soon. If you park in the front, peak through the fence along the kinder wing to see what is sprouting. If you are interested in being part of this project please contact Mariana Cypher marianacypher@yahoo.com.

KIDS FOR SAVING EARTH CLUB NEWS

Kids for Saving Earth meets each Friday at 7:15 AM in the library, except on Walk-Bike-Scoot Days when we meet at the walkers' entrance to congratulate students for using their FEET NOT FUEL. Please check the KSE website for upcoming events (<http://bgroadrunners.org/kids-for-saving-earth>). KSE is open to K (with parents) through 5th Graders. Contact Becky Luman (rebecca.luman@gmail.com) if you'd like to help out.

GRADE LEVEL NEWS

KINDERGARTEN NEWS:

Kindergarten has been counting the days of school all year. Everyday that we come to school, we become smarter, stronger students. The kids have shared some great adventures this year. On day 1 we came together and met new friends. On day 54 we celebrated together for Thanksgiving. On days 71 through 76 we all worked together to Show the Stanford test why Briargrove is the best in the lone star state. Starting on January 3, 2012 we had 80 days of school under our belt. We are now counting down the days until the 100th day of school! On January 31st we will have a celebration to acknowledge 100 days of hard work and knowledge.

Kindergarteners will enjoy crafts, games, prizes to commemorate the event. We will also have a special visitor, Zero the Hero! Zero the Hero has been secretly visiting Kindergarten every ten days since the very beginning of school. He shows us the importance of the number zero in counting and place holding. We all look forward to seeing him in person. The teachers would also like to thank the parents for their support and dedication in their child's education. We are looking forward to the rest of the year and to our celebration!

FIRST GRADE NEWS:

First grade is so excited about 2012! Here are just a few things that first grade will be learning about this month. In writing we are working on the use of verbs in sentences and stories. In Language arts, first grade is learning how to describe the plot of a story and retell a story paying close attention to the sequence of events. In math



BONUS BOX TOPS AT H-E-B AGAIN!

Buy any 10 participating products between January 18 - January 31 and receive: **70 BONUS BOX TOPS** at the register!

Remember deadline to turn in any Box Tops is February 17 Thank you all to our students, parents, and staff for your help in earning BG money with each Box Top collected! It really adds up!

Let's make January our BEST month yet... Can YOU help collect 100 this month? ;) Contests are still going on!

GRADE LEVEL news continued...

we will be learning about time and temperature. We will learn the parts of a plant in science. And in Social Studies, we will learn and identify historical figures that have influenced our nation. This month we will be reviewing some old things and learning some new things! Go First Grade!

SECOND GRADE NEWS:
Holidays Around the World - The week before winter break was filled with diversity, anticipation, and naturally-sweets! 2nd graders were hopping from Greece to the Philippines, spinning the Dreidel, and finally boarding the Polar Express. Students made paper lanterns, ornaments from walnuts, and learned to say words in Hebrew, Greek, and Tagalog. What a wonderful experience for our children to embrace their own heritage as well value the cultures and traditions of others...Knowledge is Power!

*Annual 2nd Grade Parents and Pastries; January 11 7:45-9:00 AM. Our goal is for parents and children to connect while fostering a love of reading. Of course, what better way to accomplish this than by munching on breakfast fodder. This has been a whopping success in the past, and this year will be no exception!

*Annual 2nd Grade Chinese New Year Celebration; January 23. Undoubtedly this is one of our most popular events. Students are immersed in the Chinese culture; from eating noodles and oranges to learning to write their name in Mandarin Chinese. Students learn about the origins of the Chinese Zodiac Calendar and always enjoy finding out what "animal" their birth year corresponds with. 2012...The Year of the Dragon!

THIRD GRADE NEWS:
We started the month with a field trip to the Museum of Fine Arts. Although we did not get to see King Tut we did see many interesting pieces of art. We learned about pointillism, the influences of the West on a man from New York, how the idea of what good art looks like changes just like our taste in music, and even how to paint with gun powder!

In reading this month we'll learning about how to summarize the plot's main events, reviewing how to set a purpose for reading, and how to identify and use irregular verbs as well as past, present, and future tenses. We'll also be diving into a big photo essay project – more to come on that from your teacher in the coming weeks!

-In math this month we'll be learning about measurement of all kinds, perimeter, and area.
-In science we'll be learning about the life cycles of plants and animals.
-In social studies we'll be learning about government, law, and taxes. What a way to start of the New Year!

FOURTH GRADE NEWS:
4th Grade is taking a field trip to the Museum of Natural Science on January 19th. We are excited for this experience to extend our science knowledge as well as get some research writing ideas. The students are learning how to master the art of narrative and expository writing. We are wrapping up narratives and beginning expository now. This field trip will give us some great science topics to write facts about!

Abraham's Superstars:
Reading: Angel Chase
Writing: Nicole Molina
Science: Caleb Martinez
Social Studies: Elijah Lorenzo
Math: Elijah Lorenzo
PRIDE: Prabin Panta



TIME TO MEET: MRS. JONES

I have been a teacher for 35 years and 32 of those have been spent here at Briargrove. It has been a blessing for me to be a part of many changes here, however one thing never changes and that is the level of enthusiasm and commitment the parents and community have for the teachers and staff here at Briargrove.

One of my favorite things to do is spend time with my family. I have 5 siblings and you can imagine when we get together with our children we just like to have fun. I have one lovely daughter and as you know she is now a member of our Briargrove Team also. Whitney Jones was a BG Baby and now it is wonderful to have her sharing my love of teaching here at Briargrove. I truly believe that teaching is a gift and I never want to miss a day saying "Thank you".

Principal Debbie Russell says of Meredith Jones, "She creates a family atmosphere in her classroom where kids are excited about coming to school and learning every day."

Kindergarten mom, Christina Manero said, "I am impressed with how much thought and energy Mrs. Jones puts into making sure my child is challenged and engaged."

It is time for *us* to say, "Thank You, Mrs. Jones."

GRADE LEVEL news continued...

(Fourth Grade continued...)

Azar Superstars:

Reading: Darby Vrba
Writing: Mariano Ramirez
Science: Jackson Belova
Social Studies: Scout Burt
Math: Nathalie Saaser
PRIDE: Santiago Covarrubias

Borowski Superstars

Reading: Christian Rodrigues
Writing: Carlo Hackenberg
Science: Cassidy Muth
Social Studies: Brianna Villanueva
Math: Eduardo Montesflores
PRIDE: Johneika Clark

McConn's Superstars:

Reading: Elizabeth Ingram
Writing: Elizabeth Fisher
Science: Alex Hernandez
Social Studies: Cameron Mahan
Math: Jade Beaty
PRIDE: Emma Guzzi

Sutton's Superstars:

Reading: Will Austin
Writing: Emily Cagle
Science: Diego Lira
Social Studies: Tommy Ferguson
Math: Alejandra Menjivar
PRIDE: Diego Lira

FIFTH GRADE NEWS:

The fifth grade teachers would like to congratulate the following students making it into the "**BG Rocks**" for the second nine weeks. In order to be part of this *elite* group of students, they must have obtained all A's and B's on their report card, E's only in all of their enrichment classes and in conduct, and no more than 1 absence and 1 tardy! Great job! We are so proud of you!

Emily Ellison
Mary Alex Khater
Anastasia Podtynnaya
Sena Saygili
Grace Young
Sarah Eknayan

Anna Lauren Hanhausen

Mary Bass McConn
Mohamad Talje
Kaitlin Knotts
Philip Reynolds
Destin Rocha
Alexis Cooper
Itzy Echeverria
Vanessa Parada
Sarang Vinesh
Sarah Abuhamdan
Jana Carter
Daniela Requeses
Leslie Rubio
Sara Zahed
Meera Mahesh

In other news, Ms. Ellsworth's math class finished making *Factor Monster books* based on [You Can Count On Monsters](#) by Richard Evan Schwartz. This 9 weeks, they are starting a unit on measurement by selecting and using appropriate formulas for area and perimeter in customary and SI (metric) units. We see some future engineers and architects at work!

We are all gearing up for the upcoming STAAR tests which will take place in March. Math STAAR will be on March 27 and Reading will be on March 28.

Please make sure you are visiting the teacher websites for updates of what is going on in the classroom!

CORPORATE UNDERWRITING

The Corporate Underwriting Team is seeking sponsors for the fast approaching Spring Auction. Please contact them a.s.a.p. (scroll down for contact info) to reserve your sponsorship. Many slots still open!!!

Briargrove Elementary and it's over 900+ families wish you a Great start to 2012

Save the date for our Briargrove Auction on 02.25.2012 ~ and to be an Auction partner for any of the sponsorships below ~ log on to: <http://bgroadrunners.org/corporate-partners>

*benefit to donor in **BG GREEN**

Want to be our Lone Star and bring MELODY to our ears?

Live Band: \$3,000 Sponsor. Your **Company Banner hung on Briargrove Elementary school fence** for 2 weeks prior to event and premier placement at event, Company Name on Thank You Banner and on PTO website. Secure your band sponsorship by: February 11, 2012.

~~**Or be our best Armadillo underwriter for the Auctioneer.**~~

~~Auctioneer: \$2,000 Sponsor. **Your Company Banner hung on school fence** for 2 weeks prior to event and placement at event, Company Name on Thank You Banner and on website. Secure your sponsorship by: February 11, 2012. ***SOLD**~~

Support your community, promote your business, AND advertise.

Bluebonnet gets you the ticket!

Raffle: \$2,500 Sponsor. **Your Company logo and/or name on raffle tickets, Company Name on Thank You Banner and on website.** Raffle tickets circulate to all 900 Briargrove Families in January. Secure your sponsorship by: January 31, 2012.

Longhorn – EVERYONE LOVES being on our T-SHIRTS....Hurry on this one only 5 spots remaining

T-Shirt: \$2,000 Sponsor. **Your Company logo and/or name on T-Shirt, Company Name on Thank You Banner and on website.** Briargrove kids wear T-Shirts for spirit days, Friday's, and all year long. For best shirt advertising secure your sponsorship by: January 31, 2012.

Alamo PROMO – be the one on the party favor

Promo Item: \$1,500 Sponsor. **Your Company name and/or company logo on promo items** (for example; koozie, cup, bandana) and Company Name on Thank You Banner and on website. Secure your sponsorship by: January 31, 2012.

Mockingbird

Auction Catalog Printing: \$1,000 Sponsor. **Ad in Auction Catalog, Company Name on Thank You Banner and on website.** Secure your sponsorship by: January 31, 2012.

Texas Two Step

Event Sponsor: \$250 Sponsor. **Your Company Name on Thank You Banner displayed on Briargrove Elementary fence** for all of Briargrove to see. Secure your sponsorship by: February 11, 2012.

Cynthia Wenz
Corporate Underwriting Co-Chair
713-385-4169 Mobile

Paige Gill
Corporate Underwriting Co-Chair
713-582-8012 Mobile

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT NEWS & UPDATES

Volunteer Run Before School Programs

MONDAYS	TUESDAYS	WEDNESDAYS	THURSDAYS	FRIDAYS
<p>**NEW**PUBLIC SPEAKING CLUB (3:00-4:00 starting Jan. 30)</p> <p>This exciting new club will help students develop their public speaking skills through fun activities each week. This club is an 8 week afterschool program for 3rd-5th grade students. Don't wait; there are only 10 spots available.</p>	<p>No programs in the morning at this time.</p>	<p>JOGGING CLUB Start your day off with the jogging club. Come run/walk the track from 7:15 to 7:45 a.m. All students/families can participate once a signed club form has been completed. Kinder must be accompanied by an adult.</p> <p>JOURNALISM CLUB This club is an 8 week after-school (3:00-4:00) program for 3rd-5th grade students. At the end of the 8 weeks, the students will have created a school newspaper. There are limited spots available for this club.</p>	<p>HOMEWORK HELP Looking for a quiet place to finish your homework or need a little extra help? Join us in the library from 7:15-7:45 a.m. and you will find parent volunteers in a quiet environment. Open to all 1st-5th grade BG students. Students must be respectful of the library and their classmates' work in order to participate in the program.</p>	<p>KIDS FOR SAVING EARTH CLUB (KSE) Wrap up your week on a positive note by joining the KSE. Come be educated, inspired and empowered to protect the environment. Join hundreds of thousands of kids and grown-ups all over - You, too, can be a Defender of the Planet! Meetings held in the school library from 7:15-7:45 a.m. Open to Kindergarten (accompanied by parent) through 5th grade.</p>

Fee-For-Service After School Programs

MONDAYS	TUESDAYS	WEDNESDAYS	THURSDAYS	FRIDAYS
<p>Art After School – City ArtWorks (713) 681-1331 www.cityartworks.org</p>	<p>USA Chess (888) 652-4377 or http://www.usachess.com</p>	<p>Mad Science (713) 663-7623 www.madscience.org</p>	<p>Early Language Learners – Spanish and Chinese (713) 722-0063 www.earlylanguagelearners.com</p>	<p>American Robotics Academy (281) 599-7626 or roboticsacademy@yahoo.com www.roboticsacademy.com</p>
<p>Bayou City Fencing (832) 338-9808</p>	<p>Creative Drama Casey's Creative Connections (713) 780-0085 or www.caseycreativeconnections.com</p>	<p>Hip-Hop Dance Casey's Creative Connections (713) 780-0085 or www.caseycreativeconnections.com</p>		<p>Brown's Gymnastics (713) 723-3362 www.browngymnasticsohouston.com</p>
	<p>**NEW** Group Piano with Elite Music & Fine Arts (832)477-5555 or ben@elitemusicfinearts.com</p>		<p>**NEW** Group Piano with Elite Music & Fine Arts (832)477-5555 or ben@elitemusicfinearts.com</p>	

Letter from Principal Russell

Dear Briargrove Family,

Welcome back and Happy New Year!! We are back in full swing and all circuits are go. As I walk through the classrooms I see students who are excited about learning. The teachers are gathering mid-year data through various assessments so that they can plan appropriate learning for every child in their classroom. Many of the assessments involve open-ended questions that require our kids to think deeply rather than just pick an answer as they do with multiple-choice tests. Teaching the objectives, differentiating for each learner and using open ended responses are three ways that we are working to get our students ready, not only for the more rigorous STAAR exam, but for the next grade level and beyond. Our new T-building is in place and we have an approximate time line for its completion. The architect had to re-issue the plans to the City for approval so that we can get a permit for the work to be done. The process through the various departments of the City to have the drawings reviewed will take one to two weeks. Then we will have to give the contractor a "Notice to Proceed". The contractor should take a couple of weeks after that to complete the work. Right now it looks like at least a month before the building will be complete. I will update the time line as I hear of changes. I know that you are as anxious as I am to get this building put to good use. Thank you for being patient.

The folks from Data Tech came to measure and plot where our smartboards will be installed last week. Unfortunately they are very backed up, so the installation team will not be here until the final week of February. In the meantime I am using our limited technology budget to order some new classroom computers. It is important for our kids to have access to computers for research, learning games, math practice and other activities. We live in a tech savvy world and we need to raise children who are ready to dive in.

Our visiting author, Liz Garton Scanlon will be here on April 27th to talk to our kids about her books and the writing process. You can learn more about the author and her books at her website www.LizGartonScanlon.com. Every year the PTO funds this exciting event so that our children will get a firsthand account from a real published author. This, along with our third grade Writers in the Schools program, give our children opportunities to feel and think like writers.

Our first Principal Coffee Talk was Tuesday, January 10th. It was great to see so many parents in attendance and get a chance to answer questions. Coffee Talks will usually be held on the second Tuesday, but we will be involved in Valentines on February 14th. Therefore we will meet in the library on Tuesday, February 7th from 8:15-9:00.

Sincerely,
Debi Russell

January at Briargrove Elementary

BG Staff Birthdays:

Amy Baker & Barbara Lamport 1/10, Brenda Ashley 1/30

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5 7:15-7:45 AM Homework Help	6 7:15-7:45AM Kids for Saving Earth (KSE) Report Cards	7
8	9	10 Tour of Grady's New Building 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM	11 12:30 PM EARLY DISMISSAL	12 7:15-7:45 AM Homework Help	13 7:15-7:45AM Kids for Saving Earth (KSE)	14
15	16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day NO SCHOOL	17	18	19 7:15-7:45 AM Homework Help	20 7:15-7:45AM Kids for Saving Earth (KSE)	21
22	23	24	25	26 7:15-7:45 AM Homework Help	27 7:15-7:45AM Kids for Saving Earth (KSE) 2 nd Grade to celebrate Chinese New Year Walk/Bike/ Scoot to school day	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4