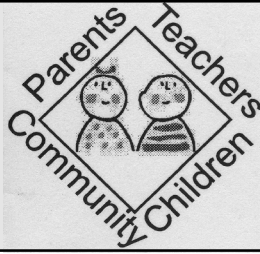


The Casis Elementary

PTA POST

Issue 41

December 2005



The Prez Sez.....

What an incredible fall we have had at Casis. Enthusiasm and energy constantly fill the hallways of the school. I hope you had a restful Thanksgiving break with your families.

A very special thanks to our Book Fair Co-Chairs Lisa Christian, Frances Thompson and Susan Wise. What a huge success! They did a fantastic job and had record crowds! I appreciate all the volunteers that assisted with Book Fair and thank you to all the generous parents who continue to support Casis!

I want to also thank Kristen Hallman for coordinating the Forest Clean-up. The forest is such a special resource for our kids and the maintenance can be huge. Again, thanks to all the volunteers who gave up their Saturday morning to work in the forest.

I want to invite all of you to the general meeting on December 8 at 7:00 pm in the cafeteria. We will welcome Carl Pickhardt as he speaks about teaching elementary students the choice/consequence connection and keeping late elementary students from falling casualty to the early adolescent achievement drop. It is sure to be an enlightening event. I hope you will attend.

Casis will be honored this month for being selected as a Texas Business and Education Coalition/Just For The Kids Honor Roll School for 2005. This award recognizes consistent performance over three years by schools that have excellent performance in each grade, in each subject, and that rate in the top quartile of their demographic peer group. We are one of 83 schools in Texas recognized for this honor. This is a prestigious award! Congratulations to teachers, staff and students for this celebration of learning.

The PTA is accepting nominations for the 2006-2007 nominating committee. The committee is responsible for proposing a slate of officers for 2006-2007. If you would like to be on the ballot for the Nominating Committee or nominate another PTA member, fill out a ballot by the sign in table outside the main office. Nominations will be accepted through December. The committee will be elected at the January general meeting.

Our January meeting is scheduled for January 12 at noon in Portable 14.

Cami Hawkins

Casis Book Fair 2005

The Casis Book Fair 2005 opened our imaginations to a world of community and love of reading. As always, the event's success was based on the kindness and dedication of so many: the many volunteers who helped and provided things during set up, at the book fair and during clean up, the teachers who took time out of their days to make this event a priority, the custodial staff, the families who came to the event, the families who underwrote the event, the businesses who underwrote the event (including Seattle's Best Tarrytown and The Soup Peddler), the fifth grade team that sold pizza, and an anonymous donor who matched the money collected for the Allan Elementary Library Fund.

Special thanks to our librarian Barbara Nichols, teachers Larry Chauvin and Derek Springer for being the Lion, Derek Springer for all his advice and help during the set up, and Marla Kiger and Blanche Gill for their long hours and hard work.

The fifth grade parents and students hosted a pizza dinner at the Book Fair, Monday, November 14. We were overwhelmed with hungry families and shoppers. We would like to thank the Book Fair Chairs for allowing us to participate and raise funds for the 5th grade trip to Port Aransas in the spring. Additional thanks go to the parents that kept the students organized that evening and baked cookies, Dawn Kintzel, Debbie Rivers, Paula Duke, Leah Lee, Julie Baselice, Dawn Goetzl, Bebe Allen, Julie Pastor, Gail Susholtz, Sarah McHaney and Lori MacNeill.

The fifth graders served over 840 slices of pizza and earned over \$1300 at Family Night. It was a fun community event that we all enjoyed. Thanks to the Fifth Grade Coordinators, Karla Bell, Beth Cunningham and Staley Gray.

Visit www.casispta.org for the latest news!

More news continued on page 2.....

Gearing up for International Festival 2006

We are gearing up for our annual International Festival. This year our theme is "Games and Sports around the World". The Festival will be held January 30, 31 & February 1, 2006. On January 30th we will have a student assembly where the students will be treated to "Music from Around the World", by One World Theatre. On the following 2 days each class will take their "tour around the world", visiting the Americas, Europe - Oceania, Asia and Africa - Middle East.

We welcome those who might have knowledge or expertise or can demonstrate a game or sport from a particular country to contact us. We are also looking for those of you who might have games to demonstrate or lend. Each year the festival's success is attributed to the volunteerism of Casis families & friends, this year will be no different. Please be looking for our Festival volunteer form in the Friday folder following Thanksgiving holiday or contact Margie Medrano at mmedrano@austin.rr.com.

AUTHOR VISIT WITH LOLA SCHAEFER Wednesday, January 18, 2006

Lola Schaefer loves children, books, nature and teaching. She was a school teacher in her native Indiana for 20 years before beginning her prolific career as an author of non-fiction books for young readers. Casis students and staff will have the opportunity to spend the day with this amazing and uplifting author on Jan. 18 and invite you to participate also. We will have 3 presentations in the cafeteria, book signing in the library and an after school in-service for teachers and staff. A small selection of her many books will be for sale prior to the event and again on the 18th - we encourage you to pre-order! Special thanks to the Casis PTA, Compass Bank and Crescent Real Estate for sponsoring this event. For more information, contact Amy Roberts 472-3735

Please remember to use your **Randall's Remarkable Card!** Under Randall's Good Neighbor Program, each time you use a card linked to Casis (our Good Neighbor Number is #4888), Randall's donates 1% of your grocery purchases to the school, at no cost to you. Also, during the holidays, please save any Community Bucks that Randall's prints at check-out and give them to your homeroom teacher, marked PTA-Randall's. These bucks are an easy way to donate to Casis.

Committee News

- Officers and Committee Chairs: don't forget to keep track of volunteer hours for our annual Partners in Education Report. Watch for forms soon.
- Collect and turn in Box Tops to your child's homeroom teacher.
- Committee Chairs, please remember to check you hanging file folders in the teacher's mailroom for correspondence and information.



Boy Scout Jeff Bradshaw and Casis Forest Coordinator Kristen Hallman put identifying tags on native plants so Casis students can study them as part of their outdoor learning activities.

Recently, more than 40 volunteers turned out to help give Casis Forest a native plant makeover. Through a Boy Scout Eagle Project led by Jeff Bradshaw of Troop 399 and overseen by Casis Forest Coordinator Kristen Hallman, the project cleared non-native invasive plants from the Forest, as well as identified existing native plants and grasses. The City of Austin provided expertise in identifying the invasive species and environmentally friendly equipment such as the "weed wrench" to extract them.

Stay tuned - Kristen is working with a second Eagle scout project by Troop 399 to replant the area with native saplings and other plants.