

The Casis Elementary

# PTA POST

Issue 42

February 2006



## WONDERFUL DAY WITH

### AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR LOLA SCHAEFER

The halls were filled with images of hawks, sunflowers, smiling faces with missing teeth, and many more creative responses to Lola's books. Our teachers have been reading and talking about Lola Schaefer's books for weeks before she arrived and the children were prepared and excited about her visit. In three hour long sessions Lola talked about her books, the writing process and ways for students to improve their writing. Her sessions were captivating, full of information, and fun for students and teachers! Lola spent the rest of her day enjoying a beautiful lunch with teachers, signing over 250 books and leading a teacher in-service session after school. We all loved Lola Schaefer and she loved Casis! Thanks to the tremendous participation and support of so many PTA volunteers that helped to make this day really special for everybody.



Barry Aidman, Amy Roberts, and Montse de Muller w/Lola Schaefer

### 2006-2007 Officer Elections Underway

The school year is only halfway over, but the PTA is already planning its transition to new officers for 2006-2007. The Nominating Committee, which will propose a slate of officers for general membership approval, has been elected. Congratulations to members Karen Brimble, Tracy Fielder, Brooks Franklin, Julia Howry, Amy Morran and alternate, Annie Melvin.

The Nominating Committee seeks your input into the process now. Nominate yourself or another talented and qualified parent for President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, or Vice-Presidents of Ways and Means, Communications, and Services. President-Elect is a two year commitment, serving as President during the second year. You can give nomination forms, which were sent home in the Jan. 13th Friday Folders, to your child's teacher or mail them to Jana Howden at 2711 Townes Lane, Austin, TX 78703. Extra forms are available on the table outside the main office at Casis.

## The Prez Sez.....

Wow! What an incredible start to the spring semester. Back to school from the holidays, we have already had an amazing author visit from Ms. Lola Schaefer and a hugely successful International Festival. I hope everyone had a chance to participate. We are off to a great 2006 at Casis and I look forward to the spring events with our awesome kids and teachers.

We are about to begin the budgeting process for the 2006-2007 school-year. The budget committee will meet in February and March to finalize a proposed budget that will be voted on at the April general meeting. We are very fortunate at Casis to have resources available to support incredible programs and enrichment activities that enhance our children's education. If there are areas you think the PTA should be looking into or if there are facilities you think the PTA could improve, please let us know. The budget process is open and anyone may attend. The first meeting will be held on February 6<sup>th</sup> in Portable 14 from 8 am to 10 am.

Our next general meeting will be held on February 9 at 7pm in the cafeteria. We will have a short business meeting and then Jamie Powell, Store Food Services Director at Whole Foods will present to us on nutrition and wellness with focus on some innovative lunch and snack ideas. Jamie is in charge of the prepared foods services at the new Whole Foods and her passion is flavor. I am very excited to have her and I hope you all will try to attend the meeting.

As everyone knows we had to cancel our meeting with Carl Pickhardt due to bad weather in December. We have rescheduled Dr. Pickhardt to come visit with us on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8:00 am. I hope you can join us after drop off in the library for his presentation. He is an excellent speaker and always has great insight and ideas on child development. This program will focus on how we as parents can better understand and help our kids manage transitional development from elementary school to middle school.

Casis conducts an annual survey of parents to determine overall satisfaction levels of teachers, administration, the PTA and the facilities. You should be receiving your Casis Survey soon. Please complete the survey and return it to the office. We have the added luxury this year of having access to the survey on-line. If you would prefer to go on-line and fill out the survey you can at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=176761666753>.

I want to give a special thank you to Laura Lee for the amazing amount of work she has done as Treasurer this year. Laura and her family are relocating to St. Louis, Missouri next month. We are sad to them go and we will miss them. John, Laura, Eric, Audrey and Jack—we wish you much happiness in your new home and school.

More news continued on page 2.....

## Casis International Festival 2006-PTA Post

This year's Casis International Festival took place from January 30-31 and Feb.1, 2006. We had many exciting activities planned around this year's theme, "Games and Sports around the World". We hope students experienced the feeling of being a "world citizen". They learned to say "hello" in a language other than English, so that they could greet others at the assembly & greet their "hosts" as they toured each world region.

On Monday morning, Jan 30th, students attended an assembly featuring "Music around the World" presented by Hartt Stearns & Illuminada, co-founders of One World Theater. The program was a fun & interactive musical adventure taking students from Japan to Brazil, India to Africa. It featured costumes & instruments from around the world. We also profited from the words of guest speaker Gilbert Tuhabonye, who overcame many obstacles and became a world class runner and Olympian.

Each class also took a one hour tour to visit exhibits from four parts of the world. They experienced sports demonstrations like Capoeira, a Brazilian Martial-Art. There was an expert on board games & their evolution from the Africa and the Middle East, to the rest of the world. The students got a chance to participate in activities related to the Olympics & Asian games & activities. As usual, food tasting from Africa/Middle East, Asia/Oceania, the Americas, and Europe was included

We would like to acknowledge Maria Arellaga, who started this festival 9 years ago. This is her last year at Casis & this festival exists because of her foresight. We would like to thank the PTA for underwriting some of the performances & activities related to the festival. Thanks to Dr. Aidman & the office staff for their cheerful & untiring support. A "pat on the back" to Leadership Casis for the many projects they did in support of the festival. Thanks to the many faculty members for their enthusiasm & participation in the "class language" project & extra learning experiences for the students. In particular, Gracias a la Sra. Jobe & Ms. Brooks, for loaning us their classrooms, for the staging of the Americas & related activities & lessons.

Last but not least, the festival was successful thanks to the many parent volunteers especially the regional coordinators: Sue Ann Kentmosu, Lisa Walsh & Kendal Pace in Asia/Oceania, Lynn Boswell & Danielle Becker in Africa/Middle East, Myra Barlin & Catherine Barrera in the Americas and Irene Alvisi & Claudia Burnett in Europe. Special thanks to Ann Veeraghavan, assistant coordinator, for all her efforts & guidance. The festival coordinator, Margie Medrano and all the coordinators would like to acknowledge the tremendous support of all who have made this year's festival possible. We know that this opportunity for Casis students to be "world citizens" was fruitful.

## Thanks to Prestige/Jack Brown Cleaners

Next time you go to Prestige/Jack Brown Cleaners be sure to thank them for cleaning over 50 sweaters, jackets and coats left in lost and found at Casis. Our adopted school, Allan Elementary, gives these items to students that are in need of something warm for cold, wintry days.

## Walk, Run, Just have Fun! The Casis Fun Run Is Coming!

Mark your calendars for  
Sunday, March 26, 2006  
O. Henry Middle School Track  
2 - 4:00 pm

If you would like to help, please contact  
Tracy Fielder [tracyfielder@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tracyfielder@sbcglobal.net)  
or Lea Holubec [Lea.Holubec@NCMC.com](mailto:Lea.Holubec@NCMC.com)

## \*\*TAKS Testing Reminder\*\*

Tuesday, February 21st

- 3rd & 5th grade reading
- 4th grade writing

## General PTA Program Announcement

The next PTA General Meeting will be on February 9th, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria. Jamie Powell, store Food services Director at Whole Foods, will present information on nutrition and wellness, specifically focusing on some innovative lunch and snack ideas. Ms. Powell is in charge of the prepared foods services at the new Whole Foods and her passion is flavor. Hope to see you there!

## Don't Forget Your Casis Survey!

Please take a look at the Casis Parent Survey sent home in the most recent Friday folder. Please fill out the paper survey, or complete online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=176761666753> or through the Casis website at [www.mycasis.org](http://www.mycasis.org). The survey is due to your child's teacher by February 10th. The purpose is to gain information on improving campus effectiveness. We appreciate your valuable feedback!

Visit [www.casispta.org](http://www.casispta.org) for the latest news!