



CASIS PTA POST

Issue 56

www.casispta.org

October 2008

THE PREZ SEZ...

WELCOME BACK, CASIS FAMILIES!

On behalf of the PTA, thank you for your contributions on the Fall Form to the programs we support. Technology Program support totaled \$68,835. The Spanish Program support totaled \$43,285. Both of these totals surpassed our expected income budgeted for this school year, which is great news! These contributions, along with our fundraisers, will allow us to sustain these programs that make Casis so special.

Thank you to our new principal Patty Martin and our new assistant principal Jaynelle Nestle for a smooth start to the new school year. This is particularly noteworthy, given that our student population has grown by 65, for a total of 835 children on our campus. These ladies make quite a team, and we are fortunate for their leadership. Our enrollment growth is an affirmation that Casis is a successful campus or, specifically, an "Exemplary" campus! This top TEA rating is the result of great combined efforts from our teachers, parents, and administration to support our children. We are very proud of our students!

Your PTA has been very busy. This summer we saw an organic garden built, planted, fenced, maintained, harvested, celebrated, and turned for student plantings. That is quite a cycle for a few short months, and we are very grateful for the leadership of Marika and Martin Milliken, Lisa Shubin, Robbi Cooper, their amazing committee, and the many Casis families who adopted plots for the summer. Teachers have been invited to purchase up to \$200 in classroom supplies or equipment to be reimbursed by the PTA. Kids walk the halls in bright tie-dyed grade-level T-shirts. After a year of studying traffic safety issues on Northwood, Circle Drive, Exposition, and

DATES TO REMEMBER

Oct. 17	PTA General Mtg., noon
Oct. 24	All-American Carnival, 5:30–8:30 p.m.
Nov. 13	PTA General Mtg., 8 a.m.
Nov. 16-22	Casis Book Fair at BookPeople Bookstore; Family Night: Nov. 19

Hillview, we received recommendations from the City of Austin and AISD on how to improve traffic flow and new equipment to help keep our children safe. Thank you to Safety Chair Jeanette Williams and her dedicated team of parents for helping us implement our new traffic rules in the first weeks of school. Change is always a bit challenging, but with the cooperation of patient parents and supportive teachers who work traffic duty and supervise our 5th grade safety patrol, the new flow is working and keeping our children much safer. Please approach our school with great caution and appreciation for the safety of our 835 precious children!

We are in the thick of fundraising season here at Casis! We've wrapped up another gift-wrap season. Casis students and parents sold hard to bring in total sales of \$68,378! I want to thank our amazing Gift Wrap Chairs Julie Kocurek, Ellen Miura, and Cari Ezell for their dedication in leading this important campaign. And by now you are covered up in Red, White, and Blue as we have kicked off our "All-American Carnival" campaign! Please encourage your friends and neighbors to join us for Carnival this year and prepare for an unforgettable evening of star-spangled fun. In November, we will enjoy our annual Book Fair with a new twist this year. We will host Book Fair at Book People with several events, including Family Night, held at the store, as well as book talks for students in our very own Casis Library.

Finally, thank you all for purchasing a PTA membership and for attending PTA meetings during the year. We had a great turnout at our September kick-off meeting with lunch hosted by the PTA Board. At our October general meeting we will hear from the Campus Advisory Committee about our Campus Improvement Plan. Please join us!

Thank you all for your support of our PTA. I am very grateful for our parents and teachers. Together we are making a difference in our school!

—Julie Ballard

Continued on next page

2007-2008 CASIS PTA BOARD

President	Julie Ballard	477-5573
President Elect	Sara Marler	452-4814
V.P. Communications	Ann Phipps	472-3199
V.P. Services	Suzanne Bell	474-2320
V.P. Ways and Means	Ashley Putman	473-2755
Secretary	Martha DeGrasse	480-9550
Treasurer	Carol Kern	477-1670
Assistant Treasurer	Janet Harris	476-7260
Historian	Laura Grim	472-4404
Parliamentarian	Wendy Thompson	407-9970
Volunteer Coordinator	Liza Layne	499-8766
AC-PTA	Allison Laughlin	472-2717
Principal	Patty Martin	414-2062
Teacher Representative	Derek Springer	841-5555

PTA Post is compiled and edited by Holly Norman,
hollynorman@austin.rr.com.

CASIS ALL-AMERICAN CARNIVAL 2008

Planning and preparation for Casis' 34th annual Carnival is well underway. This year's All-American Carnival theme has tapped into the American pride and educational opportunities associated with the summer Olympics and the presidential election just around the corner.

As advertised in the Friday Folder, Carnival is scheduled for Friday, October 24, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m on the Casis grounds behind the school. It is not only a fun family event but also our biggest PTA fundraiser. Sponsorship of this event directly funds the enrichment programs we provide that make Casis a very special place.

Your volunteer time is appreciated and needed for this event. It is our biggest PTA fundraiser and requires tremendous manpower to succeed. Please look over your Volunteer Interest Form and find shifts that work for you. Your time is another great way to invest in Casis. The reward is getting to know fellow parents and teachers and having a better understanding of what makes our grand old school so great!

Although Carnival has happened for so many years, it is amazing how there are always new ideas and ways of doing things. Our Silent Auction committee has tapped into the many talents of Casis parents as well as found the value of time! It is a valuable resource these days, and their offerings reflect clever ways to save it with convenient services and spend it getting to know new people in the Casis community.

Even though Carnival colors are red, white, and blue, the Casis Carnival Team has gone green this year! We're proud to introduce a consolidated ordering process that is available online. We're also looking for ways to reduce paper and other resources.

Look for lots more information in your child's Friday Folder about all of the exciting events coming up as we count down to Carnival. Remember, **WE WANT YOU** at Casis Carnival 2008!

PTA GENERAL MEETINGS

OCT. 17, NOON, PORTABLE 1

Come hear from our Campus Advisory Committee Cochairs about our Campus Improvement Plan!

Nov. 13, 8-9 A.M. SPEAKER SERIES

How do you get to school? If you live within one mile, it's very easy to walk or bike. If 20 percent more Casis families committed to walking and biking to/from school once a week, approximately 100 cars per week would not be in carpool lines. Casis parent Annick Beaudet of the City of Austin's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program will give a presentation on pedestrian and bicycle commuting to school and around neighborhoods.



All-American Carnival Cochairs (from left) Brandy Reimers, Thresa Nasi, and Ashley Fowler

INNISBROOK SALE IS A WRAP!

There was a lot of monkey business during this year's Innisbrook Fundraiser. Students swung from sale to sale. Early-childhood through fifth-grade students sold lots of gift wrap, chocolate, magazines, and more. Our goal was 100 percent participation, because Casis receives 53 percent of all sales!

Once all sales are tallied, top grade-level winners will be announced. This year we used a new EZ form system that saved paper and reduced volunteer hours. All orders are scheduled to be distributed at Casis during the first or second week in November.

Thank you to ALL the many volunteers it took to make this year's sale the best EVER. Thanks too to all students and parents who participated in our Gift Wrap Sale! Your efforts paid off!

—Cari Ezell, Julie Kocurek, and Ellen Miura



Children of Gift Wrap Cochairs Julie Kocurek, Cari Ezell, and Ellen Miura help transform Casis into a Tropical Rainforest to kick off the campaign! From left: Will Kocurek, Mary Frances Kocurek, Will Ezell, Wyatt Ezell, and Camille Miura.

THANK YOU Sal and Jennifer Chavarria, Casis parents and owners of Viking Fence, for making our Organic Garden fence a possibility. It looks great and will protect our outdoor classroom from many uninvited visitors!

THANK YOU Wes and Kristin Schiesz, Casis parents and owners of Austin Software Architects, for making our PTA online transaction system a possibility. **THANK YOU** Casis parent Jay Foster for working with ASA to design this system. Check it out at www.casispta.org and make PTA payments by credit card online. Hassle-free and PTA treasury team-friendly!

THANK YOU to Bert's BBQ for contributing the BBQ for our teacher Back-to-School appreciation luncheon.

THANK YOU to David and Elizabeth Adams for hosting the Padres de Casis kick off. So far, there are 78 official Padres!

CASIS BOOK FAIR IS MOVING TO BOOKPEOPLE!

Book Fair will take place Nov. 16–22 at BookPeople Bookstore, 603 North Lamar Boulevard. The Book Fair committee has lots of fun events planned for the fair. Get your holiday shopping done early—the ENTIRE bookstore will be open for purchase TAX FREE on Family Night, Wednesday, November 19, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Children will enjoy book readings, a poetry slam contest among our 4th and 5th graders, and a book raffle in the Children's Area, and grade-level baskets of books will be organized for purchase as well. A gift-wrap station will be set up to wrap any early holiday presents. Outside the store, Leadership Casis will be selling Casis reusable shopping bags and Casis hoodies. **Ladies:** come enjoy hors d'oeuvres at a special Ladies' Night Out at Book Fair from 7 to 9 p.m. on November 20. Bring the kids and enjoy some donuts at Wake Up and Read on November 22 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Best of all, 20 percent of all of your purchases ALL WEEK will be donated to Casis! You must present your Casis Book Fair flyer at checkout.

SUPPORT OUR TEACHERS

Did you know that AISD teachers, including our wonderful Casis teachers, will not receive a raise this year if Austin voters do not approve the AISD Proposition 1 bond that will be included in the November 4 election? Unlike every other form of local government, public schools do not get more money as property appraisal values increase. Instead, this year the \$173 million in increased property appraisal revenue received in the Austin area was sent, as required by HB 1, to the state treasury to be distributed to higher-need school districts. AISD trustees have proposed a tax rate increase because it is the only way they can provide teachers with a sustainable pay raise. This pay raise will put our teacher starting salaries at nearly competitive levels with Leander and Round Rock ISD. It will also show future superintendent candidates that Austin is committed to quality education.

It is important to vote on this AISD bond. It is important for voters to know to look for this bond because it will follow the political candidates section of the ballot, and people who vote a straight ticket will only see this bond if they scroll down before casting their vote.

The ballot wording does not mention the teacher pay raise and only asks voters if they approve of the AISD tax rate increase.

For this reason it is important to help spread the word. VOTE YES: teachers and educators receive a three-percent pay raise.

VOTE NO: teachers and educators receive NO pay raise.

Visit <http://www.austinisd.org/inside/budget/information.phtml> for more information about the AISD budget and the proposition.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE GARDEN?

We all returned from summer break to a flourishing summer garden planted by families who participated in the 1st annual Summer Plot Program. At the Harvest Open House on September 19, many families toured the new garden, shared harvest foods, and donated and volunteered in anticipation of Casis students' fall classroom gardens, which will be planted in the first weeks of October:

- Kindergarteners will plant seeds for carrots, Swiss chard, radishes, lettuce, and spinach.
- First-graders will choose from seeds including carrots, Swiss chard, radishes, lettuce, spinach; may also plant a single large crop like corn and some fruiting perennials like berry bushes.
- Second-graders will focus on a pizza garden to grow ingredients for a pizza party and a butterfly garden to supplement the Hillview butterfly garden.
- Third-graders will plant seeds for carrots, Swiss chard, radishes, lettuce, and spinach. As the season cools, they will plant blackberries, figs, blueberries, and other fruit plants.
- Fourth-graders will focus on fall vegetables, including spinach, carrots, radishes and broccoli, and Texas natives, to accompany their study of Texas history and geography.
- Fifth-graders will focus on fall vegetables, including beets for their Thanksgiving feast, as well as spinach, carrots, radishes, and broccoli, and an Explorer's Garden that will feature plants native to the Americas that were introduced to European explorers after they arrived here. Fifth-graders will also test the soil and study carbon and nitrogen cycles.

The garden will be open on Fridays for Lunch Recess Gardening, beginning October 10. If you are interested in getting involved in the garden programs (no gardening expertise needed!), please contact:

Marika Milliken	472-6792	marika@raleighavenue.com
Lisa Shubin	476-2605	shutson@grandecom.net
Lynn Boswell	694-2896	lynnboswell@villitaproductions.com
Robbi Cooper	469-7486	robbycooper@sbcglobal.net



\$\$ CASIS COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS \$\$

Ways your day-to-day shopping can raise money for Casis

Published by Casis PTA

October 2008

Do you know that many local and online businesses donate money to Casis just by your patronage? Below is a list of these opportunities as well as information on how a business can partner with Casis.

MATCH



Dell Employees

Oct. 27–Nov. 14 is the enrollment period for the Dell Direct Giving Campaign. Choose to support the Casis PTA, and Dell will match your donation dollar for dollar with a CASH donation to the PTA. Contact Anna Belle Williams at ab_williams@dell.com to learn more.



invent Hewlett Packard Employees

Any HP employee may choose to submit his or her Casis PTA contributions through the HP Product Matching Program. HP generously gives a 3:1 product match. Identifying HP/Casis parents will help pool contributions to maximize this matching resource for our technology program. Please contact Ashley Putman at Ashley@Hotlink.com for details.



IBM Employees

Any donation you plan to give to Casis (including Spanish or Technology contributions) can be pooled with all IBM/Casis parents for an employer matching contribution from IBM. IBM generously donates 4:1 with IBM product. Last year Casis received 32 printers for the teacher classrooms. Please contact Cynthia Bengtson at cbbengtson@yahoo.com to pool your contribution for Casis.

SHOP



Austin Software Architects

Austin Software Architects provides a variety of software, hosting, and integration services that provide a cost effective solution for high-quality business needs.

<http://www.austinsoftwarearchitects.com>

(512) 535-0074

Gayle Velayos Photography

Gayle's bright photographic murals of children are on display in the Casis cafeteria to promote our Health and Wellness program. Gayle is also the official PTA photographer. She specializes in children's portraiture. For more information, please call Gayle Velayos at (512) 769-6503 and /or visit her Web site, www.gaylevelayos.com.

Westbank Dry Cleaners

Turn in your dry cleaning receipts at Westbank and three percent of your total will be donated to Casis. To date, \$1,586.00 has been donated.



The Soup Peddler

Order healthy, delicious meals delivered free. New menu each week! Five percent of purchases go to Casis. Order at www.souppeddler.com/casis.



Randalls

Casis receives a percentage of your Randalls purchases. Designate your Remarkable Card to #4888, Casis, today. Over the last 10 years, Casis has received more than **\$50,000!**

CLIP



Boxtops for Education

Many General Mills products have small, pink, box-top coupons on the package (go to www.btfe.com for a current and complete list of participating products). Casis earns 10 cents for each box top submitted. Last year the PTA earned more than \$1,800! Box tops are collected and submitted twice a year. The first collection period is October 6, 2008, to October 17, 2008. The next collection period is February 9, 2009, to February 20, 2009. Box-top baggies are located in each classroom during the collection periods. Or, place them in the box-tops folder, located in the office. As always, keep clipping and saving box tops for the next collection period.

PARTNER

Are you interested in partnering your business with Casis? Please contact Ashley Putman at Ashley@hotlink.com for more information.