

The Weekly POST

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The Post Oak School

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CONNECT THE DOTS

by John Long, Head of School



Middle School students engage in heated debate over their mock trial strategy.

Lt. Will Treadway...deployed to Afghanistan last week. As a part of his final preparations, he visited Post Oak, the school he attended during Primary and Lower Elementary. When his family relocated, he transferred to another Montessori school where he completed the Elementary years. After high

school, Will attended the United States Military Academy at West Point.

I was honored by Lt. Treadway's visit. We are always pleased when former students drop in, and it is always an emotional experience for me to hear them tell how their Montessori education shaped them as people and impacted the course of their

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“Connect the dots,”

by John Long, continued from page 1

lives. Our graduates are amazing people and Will was an archetypal example.

I asked Lt. Treadway to connect the dots between Montessori school, West Point, and a career in the military. I explained that Dr. Montessori once called for the creation of a Peace Academy comparable to the existing Military Academies, and that one of her books is entitled *Education and Peace*.

“Leadership and service,” he said without hesitation. “The opportunity to lead our nation’s finest, in service to our country,” he added. “It all began in the Montessori Primary classroom where I learned to make decisions about what I was going to work on. All the way through Primary and Elementary, I made my own decisions about what I was going to work on and who I would work with. My teachers weren’t telling me what to do every minute of the day. Now I’m very comfortable making decisions. Also, we worked with our friends on projects. I learned how to lead and how to follow. In the military you need to make many decisions that affect not only yourself, but also the soldiers you are commanding—that’s a huge responsibility—and you need to make them quickly. I learned to do that in the Montessori classroom— to make decisions and to work with other people.”

Nikhil and Jeffrey

On the same day that Lt. Treadway visited Post Oak, I was called by Audrey Koehler, Episcopal High School’s Admission Director. Ms. Koehler calls me every spring to talk about our eighth graders who have applied to EHS. She said, “Every year you send us amazing kids. They are leaders in whatever they do. When we meet with groups of new freshmen and ask for volunteers to do this or do that, Post Oak kids always raise their hands. They are not afraid to try something new.”

Ms. Koehler went on to comment about two Post Oak grads who are now juniors at EHS, Nikhil Schneider and Jeffrey Davis. During the summer before his freshman year, Nikhil attended a summer school class as most entering freshmen do. It orients students to the EHS campus and gives them a chance to meet their new classmates. Shortly after that summer session, one of those classmates was diagnosed with leukemia. Nikhil and Jeffrey began visiting the student at home, and when he was finally able to attend school again, they became constant companions. Nikhil and Jeffrey could often be seen pushing their friend in his wheel chair through the halls of EHS. When Ms. Koehler praised them for being so helpful, the boys demurred, saying, “We’re not doing anything special, we’re just doing what people do for each other.”

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

...spoke at the AMI Refresher Course over the Presidents’ Day weekend. Csikszentmihalyi is one of the founders of *Positive Psychology*, authored the book *Flow*, and has dedicated thirty years of research to studying creativity and motivation. He also has five grandchildren who attended Montessori schools.

At the conference, Csikszentmihalyi spoke about the transition from adolescence to adulthood. He identified “Six universal conditions for wellbeing in adulthood:”

- Physical health and fitness
- A vital mind
- A continuous vocation
- Close relationships
- Involvement with the community
- Wisdom

Do schools contribute to the development of these characteristics during the period of adolescence? Based on his research work with thousands of adolescents in dozens of schools, Csikszentmihalyi

gave the following answer: For 5% of Middle School and High School students, the answer is yes. For 95%, their school experience leads to boredom, isolation, lack of involvement, passivity, and cynicism.

What do schools need to do differently to promote wellbeing in adulthood?

- Encourage autonomy and initiative.
- Promote responsibility—for self, for the planet, and for humanity.
- Foster collaboration to develop teamwork and community.

At that point Mihaly (“call me Mike”) Csikszentmihalyi put on his grandparent hat. That’s when he reflected on his observations of Montessori children and Montessori schools. “Engagement begins early. Autonomy begins early. Collaboration begins early. Helpfulness begins early. When two- and three-year olds help each other put on their boots in the winter, it sets the stage for a lifetime of service.”

That comment took me back to my conversation with Lt. Treadway. “Connect the dots between Montessori school, West Point, and a career in the military,” I asked him.

“Leadership and service,” he replied. ☞

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L-R: 1LT William Treadway, a Post Oak Alumnus, with 2LT Jon Flores at breakfast before leaving for service in Afghanistan.

THE POST OAK DAD'S CLUB PRESENTS:

An Evening with **CHRIS COONEY**, the winemaker for Napa Valley's highly acclaimed Uppercut, Provenance and Hewitt wineries

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2011
6:30PM WITH TASTING TO BEGIN AT 7:00PM
THE CRABTREE HOUSE

The event is free and wine will be available to purchase from a retail partner with a percentage of all proceeds going to the school.



Light Hors d'œuvres
Everyone Welcome, But Space is Limited
RSVP to [REDACTED]

CLASS PICTURES
Wednesday, March 30
Beginning at 8:30 am



Please see that your child arrives to school on time. We will not be able to re-take pictures if someone is late.

Looking for old pictures!

Cinco de Mayo



For part of our 20th anniversary celebration of Cinco de Mayo, we are looking for previous Cinco pictures for our slide show. We would like to include students from all classes. If you have any that you would like to share or know someone who has pictures, please submit them via the link on the left side of the homepage (if they are digital or have been scanned in), or for hard copies, please bring them to Norma Paulin here at Post Oak. Please label all photos, both digital and hard copies, with your name and the year. We will return hard copies as soon as possible.

REMAINING GALA AUCTION ITEMS

Pair of John Humphries Shag earrings ~~\$100~~ \$75

[Donated by: Mignon Faget, Ltd.] Take home these beautiful John Humphries small shag earrings made of sterling silver from Mignon Faget, Ltd. *Non-refundable/non-exchangeable.*



Splash Day \$50

Let your child be one of the lucky 20 Primary children who get to enjoy an unforgettable Post Oak experience—Splash Day with Millie & Diana! There will be cool playtime and games in the sprinklers, and great age-appropriate activities. Pizza, popsicles, and fruit and veggie snacks will be on hand for all. Children should bring their personal belongings—swimsuit, towel, sandals, and sun lotion. Post Oak will provide the fun! Event date: Saturday, June 18. (10 spots remaining at \$50 each)

Peggy Hull Design Class at the Decorative Center \$60

[Donated by: Peggy Hull of Creative Touch Interiors] Get interior decorating tips from former ASID president and owner of Creative Touch Interiors Peggy Hull. She will host an interior decorating class on March 24 (9:30 am–1 pm, lunch provided at Decco Café), presenting "Ten Key Elements of a Well Designed Room" at The Decorative Center of Houston (10 spots left). Guests can tour the hundreds of showrooms after class and a raffle will be held for those in attendance.

The Post Oak School Census 2010-2011

by Post Oak Middle School Students

The United States census took place last year. Post Oak Middle School decided to conduct a census of the school community at the same time. The census included questions regarding household size, first languages spoken, countries of birth, and gender. This report was written to share the results of the census.

During the 2010-2011 school years, the Post Oak community had 255 families. One hundred ten families responded to the Middle School census, which is a response rate of 43%. This response rate is low compared to United States Census: 74% of Americans responded to the 2010 Census.

Household Size

Most households in the Post Oak community have four members. The largest household at Post Oak has seven members. One family completed the survey twice, giving the impression that one household had only one member. However, the smallest household in our community actually has two members.

First Languages

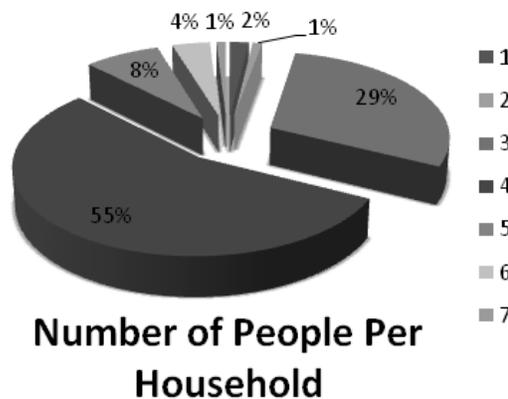
Respondents were asked to indicate the first language spoken by each person in the household. The top five first languages spoken by the members of the Post Oak Community are English (89.8%), Spanish (5.9%), Vietnamese (3.4%), Chinese (0.47%), and Telugu (0.47%). Other first languages include Urdu, Hindi, and Dutch (0.24% each). Telugu, Urdu, and Hindi are languages originating in India.

Countries of Birth

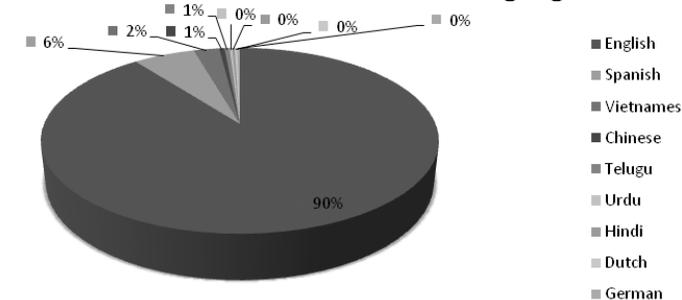
We created this histogram to represent the countries of birth of the members of our community. Twenty-four countries are represented. The countries appearing most often are the United States, India, Vietnam, Mexico, and Canada

Zip Code Data

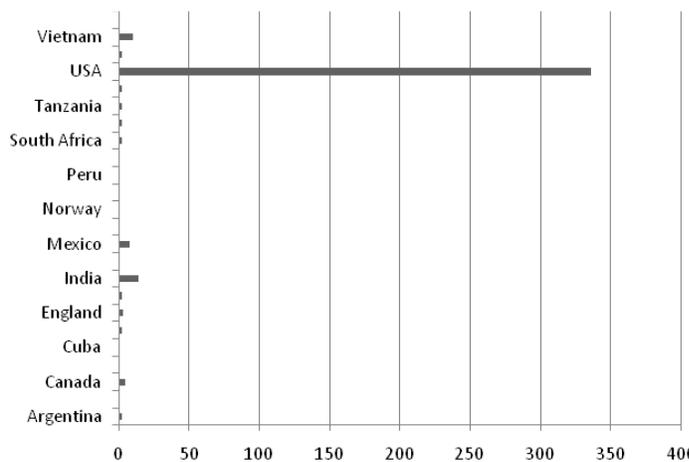
The zip code data is the amount of people that live in different zip codes in our community. We collected our information from Middle School's 2010 census-data. In the data, we have found that 208.5 people live in Bellaire and 207 live in West U. These are the two highest zip codes that people live in our community.



Post Oak School Census Data: First Languages



Countries of Birth



Cinco de Mayo

Primary afternoon children will perform regional songs and dances from Latin America, in costume, at the Episcopal High School auditorium on Friday, April 29, 2011. Post Oak's classroom assistants are very active in this traditional celebration, which commemorates the Mexican victory over French forces at the Battle of the Puebla in 1862.

Cinco de Mayo!

Student's name: _____

Class (of oldest child): _____

Phone number: _____

Number of t-shirts: _____

Total \$ enclosed(\$15/ea): _____

Deadline is Monday, **April 1**. T-shirts are available by pre-order only. Write checks to "The Post Oak School," with "Cinco t-shirt" in memo line. **Order on-line with a credit card through the link on the left side of the homepage.**

T-shirts

SIZES:	YOUTH	ADULT
_____ XS (2-4)	_____ S	
_____ S (6-8)	_____ M	
_____ M (10-12)	_____ L	
_____ L (14-16)	_____ XL	
	_____ XXL	

DVDs

Pre-order a Cinco de Mayo performance DVD online at:

www.jhphotographyonline.com/Clients/postoakschool

DVD \$30

Blu-Ray \$40

Orders will be shipped on Wednesday, May 18, 2011

Join us for the documentary

bag it

is your life too plastic?

the feature of the 2011 Post Oak

Annual Spring Environmental Lecture

Wednesday, April 20
7:00 pm in the gym

The story follows Jeb Berrier, an average American guy who is admittedly not a tree hugger, who makes a pledge to stop using plastic bags. This simple action gets Jeb thinking about all kinds of plastic as he embarks on a global tour to unravel the complexities of our plastic world. When Jeb's journey takes a personal twist, we see how our crazy-for-plastic world has finally caught up to us and what we can do about it. Today. Right now.

BAG IT is a film that examines our society's use and abuse of plastic. The film focuses on plastic as it relates to our society's throwaway mentality, our culture of convenience, our over consumption of unnecessary, disposable products and packaging—things that we use one time and then, without another thought, throw them away. Where is AWAY? Away is overflowing landfills, clogged rivers, islands of trash in our oceans, and even our very own toxic bodies. Jeb travels the globe on a fact-finding mission—not realizing that after his simple resolution, plastic will never look the same again!

Brought to you by Post Oak's Green Team.





1



2



3

SCENES

from
The Post Oak School

1. Upper El students demonstrate planets rotating on their axes and orbiting around the sun.
2. The vital functions of fish and amphibians.
3. Assembling the trinomial cube in Primary.
4. Writing about *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*.
5. Infant Community parents have "Tea with Phoebe" to discuss cooking with toddlers.
6. Giving a lesson to younger children.



4



5



6

Destruction to creation: a study of Picasso

Orly Kluk's Lower Elementary class concluded learning about Pablo Picasso by spending a day doing a creative process that went from destruction to creation. The children worked with newspaper doing different activities including tearing the news paper and throwing it all around the class. At the end of the day they made sculptures of Picasso's painting *Guernica*, and two children made Tortilla Espanola for the whole class to enjoy.



Photos by Jamie Ward

Infant-Parent Classes *at the Motherhood Center*

The Infant and Parent classes offered at the Motherhood Center are facilitated by Post Oak Infant Community teachers Deidre Lodrig & Sarah Moudry.

Learn about: Montessori principles; preparing the home with the child in mind; how to encourage independence; language development; movement; weening; toileting; active learning & concentration

Class A:
Birth-Crawling

Mondays & Thursdays for 10 weeks (1:30-3:00 pm)
 Mar. 21-May 19, 2011;
 \$500/child
 or \$900/sibling price

Note: \$10 non-refundable registration fee added at checkout.

To register: www.motherhoodcenter.com/index.php/infant-and-parent-montessori

Class B:
Crawling-Walking

Tuesdays for 10 weeks (1:30-3:00 pm)
 Mar. 22-May 17, 2011;
 \$250/child or
 \$450/sibling price

Toddler Parenting Classes *at Post Oak*

"How to Parent a Toddler"
 an adults-only class taught by
 Infant Community teacher Deidre Lodrig

Dates: Mondays, March 21-May 9 (8 weeks)
Time: 2:00-3:00 pm @ Post Oak, Deidre's class
Fee: \$160

Topics will include: working with your child in a Montessori way; discipline; grace and courtesy; peaceful households/dining with toddlers; play dates; choosing developmentally appropriate toys; supporting independence for your child; parent/child activities

To register, visit www.postoakschool.org and go to: "For Parents" —> "Parent Education" and click on the link for "Toddler Parenting Classes"

CALENDAR

For more, visit www.postoakschool.org

MARCH 13-19

Sun 3/13 Daylight Saving Time begins
(set clocks ahead 1 hr)

Mon-Fri 3/14-18 Spring Break
classes not in session—only
students with expanded-
year contracts attend

Wed 3/17 *St. Patrick's Day*

MARCH 20-26

Sun 3/20 *Vernal (Spring) Equinox*

Mon 3/21 *Naw-Ruz*

Thu 3/24 Primary Teachers speak
about Peace Making
7:00–8:00 pm

MARCH 27–APRIL 2

Wed 3/30 Class Picture Day
begins at 8:30 am
Dad's Club Wine Event
7:00 pm

Thu 3/31 Nanny Class begins
(reg. req'd; 4-week course)

Thu-Fri 3/31-4/1 Third Graders to
Camp Allen

Check out our online calendar—
or download a copy of the printed
calendar at www.postoakschool.org

NOTICE BOARD

*Come hear the Primary
teachers speak about*



Peace Making—
Conflict Resolution

March 24, 2011
7:00 – 8:00 pm

*Childcare available for Post Oak
Primary and Elementary students.
Please call the front desk to make a
reservation.*

Bearkats volleyball

Game schedule with St. Stephens:

- Wed., March 23
- Wed., March 30*

Post Oak Gym—4:15 pm

**After volleyball season ends
we will continue with flag football.*



*see a game!
support our team!*

Becoming a Love and Logic Parent[®]

This parenting course series is designed to give you practical skills that can be used immediately for enjoying parenting and giving children opportunities to grow into wisdom. Open to all parents and grandparents in the greater community.

SPRING PARENTING CLASSES

Wednesday evenings, 6:30–8:00 pm,
March 23, 30, April 6, 13, 20, 27,
and May 4

Cost: \$150 pp for the series,
plus \$10 workbook.

(\$100 for spouse; discounts given if
previously attended classes)

Drop-ins welcome, \$30 per class

Thursday mornings 9:10–10:30 am
March 24, 31, April 7, 14, 21, 28,
and May 5

No charge for Post Oak parents

Cost: \$20 per person for the series
(includes workbook).

ABOUT THE WEEKLY POST

The Weekly Post appears on most Fridays of the regular school year.
You can receive a printed copy from your oldest child, or a PDF version online.

Submit letters, articles, or photos in electronic form by 5:00 pm on the Tuesday before publication to Communication Coordinator Shannon Neufeld (shannonneufeld@postoakschool.org). If publication is on a Thursday due to school closure on Friday, then the deadline is 5:00 pm on the preceding Monday.

All photos in *The Weekly Post* are by Shannon Neufeld unless otherwise noted.

The Post Oak School was founded in 1963 and accredited by both the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS)

4600 Bissonnet, Bellaire, Texas 77401 • Telephone: 713-661-6688 • Fax: 713-661-4959 • www.postoakschool.org