A and stepped into my office at the time they had arranged to meet me. They were dressed as though they had just come from their downtown offices, and carried themselves with a quiet dignity to match. It was August. School had just begun. was not quite 10 years old and a student in our Upper Elementary; his sister was a 12-year-old Middle School student. opened a portfolio and began their tag-team presentation about the Montessori Model United Nations and concluded with the request that Post Oak consider participating. This activity, they informed me, would involve months of study and culminate in a trip to New York City to convene with hundreds of other Montessori students from around the United States and the world.

continued on page 6
The sky is NOT the limit!

Bring the family (Elementary-aged children and up) to this free event (open to the public) and hear astronaut and Mt. Everest conqueror, Scott Parazynski M.D. speak at The Post Oak School’s Annual Spring Lecture!

What: Spring Lecture
Date: March 30, 2010
Time: 6:00 pm reception  
6:30 pm lecture
Where: Post Oak gym

This date reflects a change from the school calendar.
Opera • Pearl T-shirts!

Please order with this form or online with a credit card through the link on the left side of the homepage.

Student’s name: ____________________________

Class (of oldest child): ____________________________

Phone number: ____________________________

Number of t-shirts: ____________________________

Total $ enclosed($15/ea): ____________________________

T-shirts are available by pre-order only. Write checks to “The Post Oak School,” with “Opera t-shirt” in memo line.

Order deadline March 29.

SIZES:

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Coffee with the Upper School Director

Wednesday, March 24
9:00 am, reading room
Topic: Primary Transition to Elementary

Lower Elementary green-tip belts

Lower Elementary students [and] [in Debbie Nickerson’s class] pose for a picture after the achievement of getting their green-tip belts.
Parents and nannies, sign up for the “Nanny Class”

At the request of parents who have taken the 15-hour Redirecting Children’s Behavior course (prerequisite), we are offering a series of four classes designed for nannies.

Deborah Fry, Redirecting Children's Behavior instructor, will lead this class. The class will be taught in English; however, the workbook is available in Spanish if requested.

Upon completion of the class, the nanny will be able to practice a consistent set of guidelines which harmonize with the Montessori approach; use positive language to redirect children’s behavior; encourage your child’s self-care skills and sense of responsibility; reduce sibling rivalry, and interact to build self esteem.

Thursdays, April 1, 8, 15, and 22
9:00–10:30 am

Pre-registration required; the cost is $150 per person.

Class limited to 12 participants with a minimum of 10 to be held.

Call Deborah Fry at 713-840-8663 to register.

Important dates—school year 2010-11

Watch The Weekly Post and our website for more information about next year's academic calendar. Here are a few dates we have already determined:

**Aug. 16–20:** First week for Elementary and Middle School

**Aug. 23–27:** First week for Infant Community and Primary

**Nov. 24–26:** Thanksgiving Break – school closed

**Dec. 20–Jan. 3:** Winter Break – school closed

**Jan. 17:** Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday – school closed

**Feb. 21:** Presidents Day holiday - school closed

**Mar. 14–18:** Spring Break – only students with expanded-year contracts attend

**April 22:** Good Friday – school closed

**May 27:** Last day of school

Lemonade Day

May 2, 2010

Lemonade Day is a FREE, community-wide, educational initiative designed to teach children how to start, own and operate their own business—a lemonade stand. Parents and children can learn how to do this and register on the Lemonade Day website:

[www.LemonadeDay.org](http://www.LemonadeDay.org)

Kids register with an adult, and receive a bright yellow backpack containing an informational workbook. These books will outline the steps necessary to have a successful lemonade stand.

Lemonade Day was started by Michael Holthouse, a Houston entrepreneur and philanthropist, who co-founded Prepared 4 Life (P4L). P4L is a nonprofit that provides fun, proactive programs infused with life skills, character education and entrepreneurship. Inspired by the lessons he was able to teach his young daughter and her friend when they set up a lemonade stand, Holthouse launched Lemonade Day in Houston, Texas in 2007. It has now become P4L’s number one outreach and educational priority, and always takes place on the first Sunday in May.
**Opera • Pearl**

Saturday, April 24, 7:00 pm at Episcopal High School

Page ideas created by Marketing Crew: Sam Davis, Uday Dhillon, Daniel Gasca, Matthew Sanders

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**Sailors**

“For seven years, I’ve been a rover. Away, I’m bound away ‘Cross the wide Missouri.”

---

**Octopi**

“I shall embrace this task, with my strong arms eight
If by chance I should lose one, I will simply regenerate.”

---

**Crew from Errol Pinto’s Class**

“We hammer and saw, we write, we paint
For the glory of the Opera, we create.”

---
Montessori Model United Nations

by Maya Pinto, Lower Elementary Teacher

The room was buzzing with excitement. In about 10 minutes, the large ballroom at the Brooklyn Bridge Marriott Hotel in New York had filled up with over 750 eager young faces (24 from Post Oak), while some of their friends waited outside, lining up with handmade flags of over 148 countries. There were children from the US, from Sweden, The Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Jordan, Mexico, Canada, Ghana, and China. The long hallway was lined on either side with tables upon which elaborate and interesting country displays were being arranged. Parents and chaperones were lining the sides of the ballroom – standing room only. Cameras were being readied, the dais was filled with important people who conferred, smiled, bowed, and greeted each other. It was a festive atmosphere. A parent walked up to me and smiled. Complimenting me on my sari, she pointed out other national costumes in the audience – “Next year,” she remarked, “We should also come in national dress.”

I smiled in return, and all of a sudden, the thoughts came rushing in. There was of course, the hard work we had done to complete our study in the last seven weeks in Houston. We were learning about the United Nations and how it functions, about the countries we were representing (five in all – Jamaica, Jordan, Costa Rica and Indonesia for the Upper Elementary, and Austria for the Middle School); we were learning how to write position papers from the perspective of the countries we represented on topics which are currently being addressed in the UN. We had been learning how to be ambassadors—representatives with

Mr. and Mrs. Pinto responded to my note to the faculty asking whether anyone was interested in learning about MMUN. And the rest is history, as you’ll read in these pages.

I have a couple of observations.

First, the initiative for this enterprise came from the children themselves. Initiative in large undertakings begins by making discrete choices in the classroom at the youngest age (A toddler may not even say, “Now I’ll water the plant, when choosing to do so.). After years of making choices, and helping to shape their own education, the result is a can-do attitude; an entrepreneurial spirit; and a belief that if I can imagine it, I can make it happen.

Here’s another example: Middle School students have been riding in the MS150 bike ride for six years now—ever since 8th grader Catherine Fondren said to her classmates, “Let’s do it.”

Well, actually, it wasn’t quite that easy. Her classmates’ first response was, “You’ve got to be kidding.” But Catherine kept after them. Every day she wore a different t-shirt from the many cycling events she had ridden in the previous year. And every day she talked-up the idea of forming a Post Oak cycling team. Eventually she persuaded a group of her classmates and the Post Oak Peddlars team was born.

Perseverance and powers of persuasion are but two of the attributes and skills at work.

In addition, both students and faculty demonstrate courage to tackle huge, rigorous, challenging, long-term projects. They are open to new experiences and confident that they have what it takes to succeed.

Read on for personal stories from the students, teachers and parents who carried the Post Oak banner to the Montessori Model United Nations in NYC.

Copyright John Long and the Post Oak School
knowledge and poise. We were learning committee manners, how to dress, how to address the room, state our positions and conduct ourselves with decorum. We wrote speeches, we learned how to caucus, how to write a working paper (a draft resolution) and we had to organize our travel. It was a miracle that we were even able to either visit the consulates of our countries, or that people came to visit us. Our time was so packed, we scarcely had a weekend to plan and meet for a social so that we could practice our speeches in business attire for our parents before we left. But it was memorable. We had taken on the challenge, and in true Post Oak spirit, we were going to experience the adventure – national dress or not!

Monday morning, March 1, the children reported to their various committee rooms, the Third Committee of the General Assembly, the UNDP, the WFP, the Security Council, the UNEP, the World Bank, to name just a few. They were in pairs, with each individual prepared to address a topic and negotiate for mutual benefit. The great work they were about to do had a formal procedure which lent gravity to their efforts. Within the first session, we already saw a change. These young people were calmly committed to their cause. Their minds and hearts were already with the people in the country they had adopted – the impoverished, the downtrodden, and the victims of discrimination. They were going to be advocates to champion the causes of the world without the constraints of politics or other real life baggage. They came to lunch discussing issues, not people, with common sense and sincerity. How comforted we were then, to entrust our future to these energetic well-meaning people!

As the General Assembly Hall needed roof repair, we were housed instead in another conference room later Tuesday evening. I imagined that the children would show tremendous disappointment at not being able to vote in their resolutions where the ambassadors of the world do theirs, but they were so involved in their effort to bring into conclusion those decisions they had put in so much effort to initiate, neither time nor place mattered. Their resolve was so clear to see.

With permission from their parents, and while all this was happening our delegates were also interviewed on video by a Chinese documentarian who was covering the conference. A few of our students who were representing Jordan also had an opportunity to have dialog with the visiting Montessori students from Jordan. This was significant because the Jordanian middle school students painted a vivid picture of life in Jordan as it is lived currently, and very generously gave our delegates souvenirs, mementoes, and information they had brought with them. As one of our students remarked, "...at the end I felt we had made some new friends."

So, from being away from family for the first time, to overcoming fear of addressing a large audience; from learning how to budget spending money to learning how to alleviate the burdens of poverty stricken farmers in developing countries, we returned satisfied, grateful, energized, transformed.

Stories from the delegates

MMUN was an amazing experience full of learning and fun. We learned about how other countries work. We had fun doing just about anything we did. All of us felt that we did something to help other countries. The trip would have still been great, but MMUN made it greater, debating, making friends all over the world. I will remember this for the rest of my life. We worked from 8:00 am to sometimes even 9:30 pm. Personally, it was a blast. Next year there will be no hesitation joining MMUN.

I really enjoyed March 1 because it was the first day of committee. I woke up really early and had breakfast and then went to committee. When I went to committee, we had to take rollcall. Then we started to give our speeches. Then usually somebody would make a motion to have a regular caucus. That is when all the people representing different countries gather to start writing a resolution. We also had things called “moderated caucusing.” That is when one person talks into the microphone about their views on many different things. By the way, we had to be dressed in business attire for committee meetings. At noon, we stopped to go to lunch. We came back at 1:30 and gave speeches and did

continued on page 8
moderated caucusing and regular caucusing. Then we had dinner, it was sandwiches. Then everybody went to their rooms and did whatever they did, then went to sleep.

— Grade 4

On February 28, we had a free day, except at night. At first, we went swimming. Even though we only had six people, it was really fun. We played Sharks and Minnows, Marco-Polo, and Jackpot. Later we had a mini snowball fight with only four people. After that, we went to the subway. I did not have to pay for a ticket because I was short enough.

We went to Times Square, to Toys R Us, M&M World, and The Hershey Store. My favorite store was Toys R Us, there was a big ferris wheel inside and I got to go on it! When we went back to the hotel, we had pizza. Then we got into our formal clothes and went to the Opening Ceremony. It was really cool because Jordan’s ambassador was at the ceremony!

This experience has been so amazing. I had so much fun but also worked like crazy. I have had a blast from the time I got on the plane to the time I got back on. I have so many memories I will keep with me forever. New York was amazing (especially the snow). I even made new friends from all over the world. I was so nervous at first, but I’m so proud of myself and everyone else who signed up. I have learned so many things here, things that I will never forget. If I have a chance to do this next year, I will.

— Grade 6

In MMUN at committee sessions, we had a lot of fun. My partner was My committee was the Third Committee of the General Assembly, Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural. We had a lot of fun at caucus, which is making our working papers. The best thing is that you can meet new people. It is really fun and we can send notes to people. All we do is write a note and write on the top where it is going, and where it is from. For example: Indonesia to Jamaica. It is really fun and you should participate.

— Grade 4

My country was Jordan, and at MMUN there were 37 actual Jordanian people! One of my friends got information a little outdated and put it on our display board. When the Jordanian people saw it, they kind of took it the wrong way. We had a friendly meeting about it. They were really nice and gave us some gifts, and told us how much Jordan has progressed. They were really nice about it and just seemed like they wanted to meet us and not just try and tell us we were wrong.

— Grade 5

MMUN was a good experience this year. My favorite part of MMUN was when we went for committee. My committee was the General Assembly, and my partner was . My country was Indonesia, and all of Indonesia’s draft resolutions passed and are on the MMUN website right now. We also had to read our speeches in front of everybody in the committee (which sometimes was really scary). Don’t think we just worked, because we also had snowball fights and went to the Empire State Building.

— Grade 4

MMUN was a great experience for me and I want to go again. My favorite part was the regular caucus, when we got to talk about the other countries for our draft resolution. We had to wake up at 6:30 in the morning, have breakfast, and report to our committees. I was a delegate of Costa Rica in the Third Committee General Assembly, Social, Humanitarian, and
Cultural.” We started class around 9:00 am and ended around 5:00 pm and had another class from 6:00 to 9:00 in the night. We had our opening and closing ceremony and we got a chance to tour New York. I want to do MMUN once again and it was a great experience for me.

— , Grade 6

One of my favorite parts of MMUN was when we had our first day of committee on March 1, 2010. When I first woke up, we ordered room service, I had the “All-American,” and it was huge. It had eggs, hash browns, bacon, and toast. Then we all got dressed in business attire and went downstairs. When committee started, the delegate of Germany made a motion to set the agenda. Then the delegate of the United States of America made the motion to set the speaker’s time for 1 minute and 30 seconds, so we voted and the motion did not pass. So then my partner made the motion to set the speakers time for 2 minutes and then the motion passed. Then a delegate opened the speaker’s list. Then we heard a few speeches. Then we had a regular caucus, and then a moderated caucus. Then we went to have lunch. After lunch we went back to committee and started on our working papers. Working papers become draft resolutions. It was a lot of fun.

— , Grade 4

Stories from the parents

by Jeff Woodman

"Who are these kids?” said a woman to my wife. My wife and I were on the subway with five Upper Elementary students on our way to see the Empire State Building. My wife was sitting next to a New Yorker who was watching the Post Oak students exploring the subway’s wonders. They were figuring out the stops we made and calculating how many more stops we’d need to get to our destination. They were curious about how the subway cars followed the tracks when the subway turned, asking many questions about how the cars stayed on the tracks, and balancing as the subway turned. When I’d ask them to hang on, or step away from the doors so that people could get on or off, they did so quickly and quietly. The New York subway rider speaking to my wife was amazed at their behavior, courtesy, and curiosity. We experienced this time and time again during our visit to New York City for the Montessori Model UN program. Waiters, cab drivers, hotel employees, and UN workers asked or said "who
are they? “Where are you from?” “These children are so well behaved,” “They’re so smart.” I could only nod my head in agreement and amazement.

Here are some examples to give you a feel for the compassion and generosity the children demonstrated. We had a few minutes before the caucus sessions and I asked if he wanted to call his family. He thoughtfully said he’d rather call when he had more time because if his sister answered he wanted to give her plenty of time to talk. “She says a lot of important things,” he said, “sometimes she’ll talk for an hour.” I asked if that was his older sister and he said “no, she’s seven.”

As we were preparing to leave the hotel I wondered how we’d get all of the luggage down to the lobby. I saw me looking at the huge pile and volunteered to help. He grabbed not one, but two, large suitcases and began maneuvering them down the hall.

As we assembled in the lobby to leave for the airport I saw Mrs. Pinto in the gift shop. I called “Come on, we’ve got to go,” and looked at me anxiously so I said “Do you know exactly what you’re getting and are you ready to pay for it?” He said he did so I went in to help him. What he wanted was on the top shelf, much too high for him to reach. When he had completed his purchase he looked at me with a huge smile and said “Mr. Woodman, I’m so happy. I really wanted to get that for my brother.” Later, in the cab as we rode to La Guardia to leave New York, I realized he hadn’t bought a souvenir for himself. “That’s ok,” he said, “I like what I got for my mom and my brother.” And of course there was . At dinner the night we went to the United Nations I waited at the table to watch everyone’s things while others went up to the counter to order. came back with a plate of food and said “Here Mr. Woodman, I thought you’d be hungry.” I couldn’t believe it. I hadn’t said a word about being hungry; it was so thoughtful of him. I pleaded with him to eat his food but he insisted that I take it with convincing arguments that I couldn’t counter! He always had a room key when our hands were full, always knew the time at critical moments, always ready to help out in any way possible, always with courtesy and a smile.

It was such a joy to be with the students on this trip. They were so helpful, so considerate, so bright, and so much fun. A profound comment we heard more than once from the New Yorkers we met was “Seeing these children makes me feel hopeful about the future.” One night the boys couldn’t sleep—they were laughing and having a great time. I wanted to quiet them down but they were having so much fun together. “What’s better than laughing with your good friends?” I thought to myself, “I’ll give them five more minutes.” As I lay there, waiting, reflecting on our time in New York, with the boys’ laughter in the background, I felt really good about our future.

by Gaurav Sood

I still remember a few weeks ago when I was sitting at home and Mr. Pinto called me to see if I may be interested in going to the United Nations as they needed a dad chaperone. I thank Mr. Pinto for providing me with this opportunity, and I want to now circle back and share some of my thoughts from this trip with The Post Oak School community. We were in New York from February 27 thru March 3, and I greatly enjoyed this trip. As with any school trip, every minute counts. True experience lies in being a part of the group and the agenda, in addition to visiting another city even when it’s New York!

Mrs. Pinto and Mr. Pinto—you guys worked so hard and were just
AWESOME! Given that this is the first time we participated, we were so well prepared. I saw Mrs. Pinto almost losing her voice on the trip. I saw when both of you finally sat down to have lunch at 3:00 pm one day. For working so hard, please accept my personal thanks and the thanks on behalf of all the parents who sent their children.

Big thanks to all the chaperones (Gina Li, Shealynn Schank, Jeff and Connie Woodman, Cynthia Allshouse, Nandita Gupta, Suzan GrangerTyler, Melissa Chapman and anyone else who I may have inadvertently left out): It was great sitting in the sessions, taking the kids for multiple snowball fights and organizing the various meals and trips. I greatly enjoyed my time and making so many new friends with the chaperones and with the kids. I actually missed the kids all day Thursday and Friday after coming back to work.

John and Jeff, thank you for supporting the creativity of ________ and others! Our involvement in this national stage was only a matter of time. So many people that I spoke to knew of The Post Oak School— it’s almost unbelievable. From Florida teachers who have been to The Post Oak School to Zoe Castro from Apple Valley, Boston who trained under you years ago and has sent best regards to you (Jeff). Many other people had heard of The Post Oak School and wanted to know more about our school. I felt like an ambassador of The Post Oak School and I am so proud that my kids go to “The Post Oak School.” If I had any doubts about my selection of school for my kids over last three years, I now know that hundreds of people across the country cannot be wrong in validating this institution.

For all the parents of future United Nations Delegates (UND), I say:

- This is a great national forum for your child to experience and participate. We had approximately 750 students stepping into shoes of various ambassadors to debate issues across different mock UN Councils. These students came from across the world including Mexico and Jordan, and for guest speakers—we had real ambassadors along with other esteemed leaders.
- I also got a chance to know many of the kids personally and find out more about my child during this trip. I greatly encourage parents to take the time and get involved—you are not going to get too many of these opportunities. It was a pretty busy trip and I was still able to keep a balance between taking care of kids and keeping up with calls to Houston. I actually got just enough time to wrap up some of my work when the kids were in sessions and therefore, I didn’t have a pile of things when I came back. So, get involved!

- This program is only available to the Montessori kids from 9-15 years of age. I also spoke to the main organizer Judith Cunningham who even suggested that if your child is not yet in Upper Elementary, she or he can still prepare to be a UND by doing research on the country that they might want to represent.

- Please feel free to explore the official site to check out more details: www.montessori-mun.org.

And finally to everyone at The Post Oak School community - Our UN delegates were just brilliant! Each and every one of them. Speeches were great, debating skills were put to serious test and our UN delegates spoke the best. They actually fought for a turn to carry the flags for continued on page 12
the closing ceremony in front of everyone—my heart was filled with love for all these kids and gratitude for this opportunity. Memories of this trip will stay with me for a life time. In words of Maria Montessori:

“Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war.”

(above quote from the MMUN website)
Bearkats • Volleyball

Come cheer on the Bearkats volleyball team!

Volleyball games against St. Stephen’s will be March 24 & 31. Intramurals will continue for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays until April 29, which will be the last day for intramurals. Spring Signing Day for Bearkats is April 28. This will help us determine the approximate number of athletes we will have for the 2010-2011 sports seasons. Please look for more information in the coming months via emails and our newsletter.
1. Choosing a number for a math problem.
2. The smelling bottles.
3. Constructing his house out of paper.
4. The stamp game.
5. Practical life in Infant Community.
6. Primary PF hurdles.
7. Spacing Out: Elementary children practice a play about the solar system that they will perform on their class camping trip.
8. Preparing for the trip to Austin.
Volunteer with graphic design skills needed

The 2011 Gala Invitation Committee is looking for parent volunteers with graphic design skills to work on the committee. If you are interested, please contact Christina Cantu at christinacantu@postoakschool.org or call 281-822-8024.

Lost & Found to be emptied soon

Parents: please come and have a look for your children’s things in our Lost and Found box in the front lobby. The box will be emptied soon and its contents will be donated to charity.

Opera song lyrics available online

Parents: you can find the lyrics for the opera Pearl online in the Parent Community. You can get to the parent community by clicking on “Community Login” on the bottom right of the homepage. Your username is your first and last name together, i.e. “johnsmith.” If you cannot remember your password, leave that field blank, and click submit—your password will be emailed to the email address we have on file for you.

Celebrate Spring Break at the Houston Museum of natural science

March 15 - 19, 2010

Students and chaperones may view the 9 permanent exhibit halls for $2.50. The butterfly center and the planetarium are $2.50 each. An IMAX® film is $5 per person. Also available is the exciting special exhibition, Magic! for $7. (Price of special exhibitions includes free admission to the 9 permanent exhibit halls.)

IMAX films (March 15-18): 10 a.m. and noon, Bugs! 3D; 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., Dolphin & Whales 3D; IMAX films (March 19): 10 a.m. Bugs! 3D; 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Dolphins & Whales 3D; 12 p.m. Hubble 3D.

Planetarium schedule: 10 a.m., Secrets of the Cardboard Rocket; 10:30 a.m., Dawn of the Space Age; 11 a.m., Dinosaur Prophecy; 11:30 a.m., Earth’s Wild Ride; 12 p.m., Dawn of the Space Age; 12:30 p.m., Life in the Universe.

Spaces are limited. For additional information or to schedule a trip to the Museum, contact: Field trips, (713) 639-4659 or e-mail fieldtrips@hmns.org. Book your summer field trips now, too!
## CALENDAR

For more, visit www.postoakschool.org

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<td>Fri</td>
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<td>MARCH 28-APRIL 3</td>
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<td>Tue</td>
<td>Annual Spring Lecture with Astronaut Scott Parazynski</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>School Closed</td>
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<td>04/02</td>
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<td>NO CHILDCARE</td>
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### BARBARA HACKER’S GREEN TIPS OF THE WEEK

#### Planning a big party?
Skip the disposables, or look for renewable and biodegradable party products.

#### Commercial candles
often contain a fair amount of lead. Make sure that all the candles you’re using or giving as gifts are lead-free, soy-based, and scented with natural ingredients.

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### NOTICE BOARD

#### Parenting with love and logic follow-up

This is a follow-up to the parenting series especially for parents of children in Upper El. and Middle School, that was offered by School Counselor Phylis Tomlinson. All parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

For more information: www.loveandlogic.com or call Phylis (713-661-6688 ext. 176.)

**Thu, March 25, 3:10-4:00 pm**

**RSVP to debbiehenderson@postoakschool.org**

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### 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 pm on the Tuesday before publication to Communications Coordinator Shannon Neufeld (shannonneufeld@postoakschool.org).

THE POST OAK SCHOOL: founded in 1963 and accredited by both the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS)

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