An introduction from John Long, Head of School:

Former Post Oak parent Jackie Dryden is the mother of Allison Dryden, Post Oak class of 1996. The following is the continuation of Jackie’s talk at the POPA Dinner, part one of which was printed last week:

The hardest transition for Allison, in going to high school, was not the academics. That first incident aside, everything came easily to her. A lot of times, she thought, “Wow, I can’t believe they’re just doing this. I can’t believe this algebra is all that they know, but I’ll do it, okay.” And it wasn’t that she was doing it in a condescending way, she was just surprised and interested that people were doing things at a slower pace.

The social transition was more of the challenge for her, and it came in this form: she had the wrong shoes.

Building a foundation in the number system using the golden beads.
"A foundation at Post Oak," continued from page 1

I know that doesn't sound like much, but when you're 14-years-old, and all the girls have the right shoes on except you—it was devastating. So after the first day of school, we had to go out and buy the right shoes. Well, by now, she was already labeled as "the wrong-shoe girl," for life, so she was sure that was horrible. She would come home, in freshman year, and she would be in tears and she would say, "I don't know who to sit with at lunch. I just don't know anybody. It's just not the same as when..."—all the girls at Post Oak, she grew up with. So I said, "What I want you to do is go find somebody who looks more miserable than you. Ask them if you can sit down with them. They'll be so happy to see you that you'll make a new friend." She said, "Oh mom, that's stupid." And I said, "Yeah I know—but it works."

So she did that, and she started talking to people who would be sitting down at their locker and had nobody to talk with. She stopped in the hallway for girls who were in tears. She had conversations with people that she had never met before. And she found out that by reaching out, all of a sudden there were these wonderful relationships and great friendships. And I'll tell you that she finished her fourth year at St. Agnes as a cheerleader and homecoming queen at St. Thomas. She learned I'm thinking, "You're 19 years old—where did this come from?"

She said, "I just went through my third set of finals, and I feel really bad for all of my friends."

I said "Why? Is it that you're smarter?"

She said, "No, that's not it. Right before finals, what I've witnessed for the third time, is that everybody, three days, four days before, is staying up all night cramming, trying to get all this information in, sweating it, taking no-doz, drinking coffee all night long, and I'm sleeping."

I asked, "How did you do that?"

She said, "Well, when I get my syllabus for the semester in that particular class, I look at it, and see what it is we're going to do, and I say, well that's going to take about this much time, and then I'll work on this part, and then I'll get this part done, and then I'll be here. For all my finals, I studied one night, and I was done."

And I said, "Really? Doesn't sound like my college experience at all—but hats off to you."

So I was very surprised that I was hearing about Post Oak when she was a sophomore in college. And it was then that the light bulb came on and she realized that she had learned differently and she had these skills that were going to serve her for a lifetime."

Allison graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Baylor. She studied medicine at the University of Texas at Houston and is now in her third year of residency at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She plans to become an emergency room physician.

...In June, we found out that she's pregnant. She'll have a baby in February. The first thing she said to me (after we went "Yippee-yay-excited-oh-my-gosh-jump-up-and-down," ) was, "Mom, I've got to find a good Montessori school in Nashville." And if Post Oak was in Nashville, you better believe that's exactly where she'd be.

So I just want to say to you guys who are on this journey: there is life after Post Oak. It's a wonderful thing—but it never leaves you. It's a foundation. It is part of your family forever. It will be part of your children forever. How blessed are they to have you as parents that have seen the goodness that this can give to your children that will last a lifetime.
October is Post Oak Fund month, a time when we ask our community to make a contribution to the school to help cover what tuition does not. The fund drive kicked off a week ago with Chairs Amy & Lloyd Kirchner preparing your class captains for the campaign. Friday, October 1 you will receive your letter from Amy & Lloyd about The Post Oak Fund and its importance to the school. Our goal this year is $250,000 and 100% parent participation (last year we reached 99%).

Congratulations to Orly Kluk’s class, which started early and has already reached 100% parent participation. In addition, all Post Oak Trustees and all employees have generously donated to the Post Oak Fund, and to date we have raised over $100,000. With $150,000 to go, it will take everyone’s thoughtful participation to make our goal.

**How to contribute?**

1. Consider an amount that is meaningful for your family.
2. Send in your gift or submit a pledge using the response card in your letter.
3. Or, you can contribute online (www.postoakschool.org), or pledge by sending me an email indicating your pledge amount.
4. Pledges are due at the end of the school year, but your participation counts the moment we receive the pledge.

Unlike most private schools that have an annual gala along with their annual fund, our gala happens every other year. Yes, this is a gala year, and yes, we hope you will show your support in both The Post Oak Fund and in the 2011 Biennial Gala, *Dancing Across Cultures*. These school-wide fundraisers support the day-to-day work in many ways. Whether through professional development, additional financial aid, technology enhancements, or the replacement of worn materials, fundraising dollars support/contribute to the financial stability and flexibility to keep Post Oak, its faculty, its facilities, its programs, and its character in top form.

Please call me or drop by my office if you have questions.

Thank you!
Christina Kopanidis-Cantu 
(christinacantu@postoakschool.org)
Direct: 281-822-8024

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**Participation as of 9/28/2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Parent Participation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basham</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full-Day Infant</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hacker</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hansen</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kluk</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lodrig</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moudry</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>E. Pinto</td>
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<tr>
<td>M. Pinto</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sabhani</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winton</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total parent participation: 16%**

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**2011 Post Oak Fund Class Captains**

- **Fund Drive Chairs**: Amy & Lloyd Kirchner
- **Basham**: Alicia Kowalchuk & Benjamin Saldaña
- **Hacker**: Ann Lee
- **Hansen**: Tanya Gee
- **Kluk**: Stephan Kinsella
- **Lodrig**: Rochelle Tafolla
- **Long**: Dinh Lam
- **Middle School**: Bev Bontrager
- **Moudry**: Shonali Agrawal
- **Nickerson**: Annie Singleton
- **Parraguirre**: Daniela Sanchez
- **Pinto, E.**: Sherry & Lewis Chandler
- **Pinto, M.**: Liz Pulaski
- **Full-Day Infant Community**: Aimee Taylor
- **Roark**: Beth Apollo
- **Smith, E.**: Gina Luna
- **Sobhani**: Shonali Agrawal
- **Winton**: Mary Stephens
- **Board of Trustees**: John Long
- **Faculty/Staff**: Sherricka Gray
Butterflies and wildlife at Field Day 2010!

Please join us for Field Day on Saturday, October 16, from 10 am–1:00 pm, for lots of Post Oak community fun! A special addition this year is a traveling exhibit from the Cockrell Butterfly Center at the Houston Museum of Natural Science! We will have a special butterfly tent where you can see the beautiful butterflies up close and even feed them! There will be fun insects and bugs in the exhibit as well, so come by to experience this awesome addition to Field Day!

In addition, we will have a docent from the Texas Wildlife Rehabilitation Center bringing wildlife that has been rescued and rehabilitated here in Houston—owls, squirrels, snakes, and other wonderful wildlife will be there. So join us to learn more about the wildlife in our own backyard along with enjoying all the other fabulous Field Day activities!

Field Day Tip: Plastic water bottles will not be sold. Bring your own water bottles, which can be refilled at the event.

Field Day mystery box themes

Field Day fast approaches! This festive and free family event is paid for by ticket sales for the Mystery Box raffle. Room Parents have been busy gathering parent donations and items for these intriguing prizes. Thanks to all families who have contributed to the box contents! Mystery boxes will be on display later next week. To the right are the themes for each class. Raffle tickets will go on sale Tuesday, Oct. 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Mystery Box Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basham Tamara</td>
<td>Imagination Toolbox</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Art</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hacker Barbara</td>
<td>Rainy Day Fun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hansen Emily</td>
<td>Love Our Earth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kluk Orly</td>
<td>Cooking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lodrig Deidre</td>
<td>Zoo Animals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long Kathy</td>
<td>Ocean Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>Everything from A to Z</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moudry Sarah</td>
<td>Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nickerson Debbie</td>
<td>Games of Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parraguire Julie</td>
<td>Nature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinto Errl</td>
<td>Mystery Box</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinto Maya</td>
<td>Fantastic Family Fun Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roark Laura</td>
<td>Sports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sobhani Hifa</td>
<td>Books</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smith Erin</td>
<td>In the Garden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winton Miriam</td>
<td>Endangered Animals</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
underwriting

Gala Underwriting letters have been mailed. Please thoughtfully consider your support of the school and participation in this biennial major fundraising event. Underwriters of $1000+ are invited to a special Cocktail Reception in January.

ways to donate

Not enough time to volunteer for this year’s Gala? You can still help by making a donation. The Auction Committee is looking for:

• Frequent flyer miles (any amount, any airline)
• Club card points
  American Express, Diners Club, Rice Epicurean, etc.
• Hotel chain rewards
• Private golf club access
  round of golf for two or more
• Napa/Sonoma winery
  access to private tours, restaurants & hotels
• Vacation homes
• Working Texas ranches

Other ideas? Just give us a call. Please contact Paula Mey.
1. Working with root words.
2. Primary yoga: lizard on a rock.
3. Working with the decanomial square (a geometrical representation of the multiplication table).
4. Keywords with Ladybird.
5. Creating a model of an apatosaurus.
7. Acting out the word “bend.”
8. Working on the class gala project.
9. Charting singular and plural.
10. Test tube division.
11. The joy of finding the right shape!
12. English language cards.
13. Keri Rebuffini, who now lives in Bergamo, Italy, visits her former Upper El students, now in Middle School.
Individual student pictures scheduled

*individual student photographs are scheduled for*

Tuesday–Friday, October 12–15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maya Pinto</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>Errol Pinto</td>
<td>Laura Roark</td>
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<td>Sarah Moudry</td>
<td>Deidre Lodrig</td>
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<td>Barbara Hacker</td>
<td>Julie Parraguirre</td>
<td>Hifa Sobhani</td>
<td>Emily Hansen</td>
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<td>Tamara Basham</td>
<td>Erin Smith</td>
<td>Debbie Nickerson</td>
<td>Orly Kluk</td>
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<td>Miriam Winton</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Individual student pictures scheduled

*individual student photographs are scheduled for*

Tuesday–Friday, October 12–15

**the first 2010–2011**

**POPA Coffee Work Day**

Now on Wednesdays

**Field Day Mystery Box Wrapping Party!**

Wednesday, October 6
8:45–11:30 am

These volunteer gatherings are held each month in the Common Room after drop-off at 8:45 am. They enable parents to socialize while helping prepare classroom materials and do other work in support of the teachers. Come by whenever you can. Coffee and good company provided.
Middle School book corner

Watership Down by Richard Adams is a book about a dozen male rabbits running away from their home because of a vision one of the smaller rabbits had seen. The book follows their struggles of trying to survive while avoiding the dangers posed by the neighboring warrens. They are also on a quest to find female rabbits to create a new warren. Watership Down follows the idea of Rudyard Kipling, in his two Jungle Books. The author first told the story of Watership Down to his daughters on a long car trip. The two daughters thought it was magnificent and encouraged him to write it down. As the author put it, “Watership Down was never intended to be some sort of allegory or parable. It is simply the story about rabbits made up and told in the car.”

— Grade 8

The eighth graders recently read a book called The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros. It takes place over one year, and is about the life of a 12-year-old Mexican-American girl named Esperanza. The book is made up of a series of short stories focusing on her day-to-day activities. The stories are all about Esperanza, but do not create a flowing storyline. When the book begins, her family has just moved into her first house, the house on Mango Street. She has always dreamed of living in a real house, but not one like this. The house is located in the ghetto of Chicago, and Esperanza has to deal with things like abuse and discrimination. She frequently mentions the fact that she will someday get out of the Chicagoan ghetto and have a real home, not a house. She matures a lot throughout the year, and discovers many new friends and interests, such as writing. I really enjoyed this book because if you read it multiple times and think about the actual words, you will discover deeper meanings within the text.

— Grade 8

A child asked his father once why leaves were green...

The following excerpt is from The Center for Guided Montessori Studies e-newsletter.

“...The teacher requires a special preparation, because it is not our logic that solves problems. In no point on which we have touched, does our logic help, we have to know the child’s development and to shed our preconceived ideas.”

“Great tact and delicacy is necessary for the care of the mind of a child from three to six years, and an adult can have very little of it. Fortunately the child takes more from the environment than from the teacher. We must know the psychology of the child and serve him where we can.”

—Dr. Maria Montessori

The Absorbent Mind

(A Montessori quick bite from The Center for Guided Montessori Studies)

As adults, we have built up layers of abstraction into an understanding that helps us navigate a complex world.

What did our ancestors need to know of chlorophyll or the various spectra of reflected light? Entering the world anew, our ways of thinking may be useless, and actually add confusion. At worst, by imposing abstractions onto a child we may diminish their pleasure in exploring the world and subvert that natural science that children do best. Abstractions are wonderful tools of the intellect, and sharing them with a child receptive to them can be joyful. Much of being a Montessori guide is learning to observe a child and understand best where their sensitivities lie. A book on photosynthesis might be perfect for one child, whereas another child may do best with an activity on the life cycle of the seed and yet another child might have her curiosity met by taking care of a classroom plant. In all cases, the concrete precedes the abstract; hence, a prism is a better tool for introducing the notion of spectra than a dry discourse.

Part of the challenge of being an educator is to unravel the cloth of our adult perceptions. We must see the world as a child in order to understand how to help them knit together their own understanding and mastery.
Find us at our Field Day table to learn how you can help make our school healthier and greener. Remember to bring your own refillable water container to Field Day. No water bottles will be sold.

The Green Team has been meeting and is glad to announce the three priorities for this school year:

   Take the zero-waste challenge. Look for a table at Field Day showing non-toxic lunch box options and suggestions for how to pack a zero-waste lunch. This week students weighed their trash so they can try to reduce it. Teachers report that families are already doing a good job at sending low-waste lunches.

2. Improve indoor air quality.
   Work with the facilities team to evaluate indoor air quality and help implement measures to improve it where possible. This might include using fewer and cleaner chemicals and building materials or installing different air filters on the HVAC system.

   Evaluate the cleaning agents that are needed and find the least toxic, affordable and effective options. Different green cleaners are already being tested by the school staff for laundry, dish, glass cleaner and general purpose cleaners. Also, in addition to simply reducing the amount of disposable products being used, when necessary, biodegradable or recyclable products are being tried.

Please do your part to support the school's efforts to be healthy and green. We can help you if you've got questions.

Email: kellymcnamara@postoakschool.org if you'd like to join the committee.

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Green Team Update

This past Saturday, the Post Oak Bearkats competed in their first meet of the year at Houston Christian High School. There were over 1,500 runners in total from sixth grade through the high school levels. The Bearkats had runners in the eighth grade girls division, and sixth grade boys and girls divisions. The weather was hot and humid making it a difficult day to run, but our runners all did well. In the eighth grade girls race, finished sixth overall, and her sister finished seventeenth in a race that had over 150 girls in it. Our other runners on the day were and .

Congratulations to all our runners!

— Coach Tucker
Parent Education

The Post Oak

Upper Elementary Experience

Thursday, October 14
7:00 pm
common room

For Primary and Elementary childcare, please call the front desk—$5 per child.

Becoming a Love and Logic Parent©

Post Oak Counselor Phylis Tomlinson presents “Becoming a Love and Logic Parent©” curriculum for Elementary age and beyond. The class will be given Thursdays from 9:00–10:30 am in the Post Oak multipurpose room (formerly called the reading room) on the following dates:

Sept. 16, 23, 30, & Oct. 14*
continuing Oct. 21, 28, Nov. 4 & 11

*Only the October 14 class will meet in the Tile Room—this is a change of date from October 7.

Topics include:
• The Two Rules of Love and Logic©
• Delayed or “Anticipatory” Consequences
• Using Empathy and Love and Logic One-Liners to Neutralize Arguing
• How to get more information about Love and Logic

This parenting program is designed to give you practical skills that can be used immediately.
These classes require pre-registration by calling Phylis at 713-661-6688 ext. 176.
Only costs: $10.

Embrace on a Montessori Journey

online signup
limited space available

Montessori Journey dates:
• November 5, 2010 6:00–9:00 pm
• November 6, 2010 8:00 am–2:00 pm

Each year the faculty of Post Oak invite prospective and current parents to participate in Montessori Journey.

During this (adults only) two-day workshop, you will experience the five different classroom environments from Infant Community through Middle School, first as an observer and then as an active participant receiving lessons and working with classroom materials.

This workshop is a hands-on approach to understanding how and what your child is learning. Enrollment is limited to 40 people and the charge is $30 per person to cover the cost of food. Please complete the registration online through the link on the left side of our website.
**NOTICE BOARD**

**WELCOME**

**Silva-Noah**

Kellie and Joshua Silva-Noah (Middle School humanities teacher), and their son (in Primary), welcome the newest addition to their family, baby Silva-Noah. He was born on Sunday, September 26 at 4:10 pm. He weighed 6 lbs, 12 oz, and is 18.5 in long. Big brother is so proud!

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**The Toddler Dining Experience**

Enjoy a social hour filled with encouragement and tips from our faculty.

**October 28, 2010 7:00–8:30 pm**

*Hor d’oeuvres and beverages provided*

**RSVP to Mirani Smith**

(miranismith@postoakschool.org)

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**Reception to honor former Half-Day Infant Community Teacher Susan Tracy**

**Thursday October 21 4:00–5:00 pm**

Drop by the school to visit with Susan and wish her well.

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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 5:00 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