Who Our Child Is Becoming
Lessons from the Science Fair

Introduction by John Long, Head of School

Bubble boy. Leaf-blower Hovercraft. Virus colonies grown in petri dishes (including instructions for how to swab samples from nose and throat). Truss bridges built of popsicle sticks, then load tested to the point of failure. Raptor pellets (the regurgitated fur and bones of small animals eaten by birds of prey) in small plastic boxes (“Warning: don’t open. It will stink really bad.”). Archimedes’ screw (hand-crank device used to lift water to a higher level) (both the model that succeeded in its purpose and the one that failed). Preserving potatoes in alcohol. Testing water from various sources at Post Oak. How do rock music and calm music affect blood pressure? Static electricity (Why does it make your hair stand on end?)

continued on page 2
"Who our child is becoming."
by John Long, continued from page 1

Upper Elementary students worked alone or in pairs on projects which included written research as well as a hands-on experimental component. Students set up in the gym and presented their projects during the school day to Lower Elementary classes and during the evening to parents. It was clear from their presentations how well prepared and knowledgeable the students were.

For at least one family, the Science Fair presented an unplanned opportunity for growth. Read on:

Morning, John!

Wanted to share the following with you—I am writing this from a Disney hotel in Orlando where I am staying through Friday. David and I are currently in the air en route back to Houston.

To explain: every year when we get the POS calendar, David and I try to plan out our family vacations. This year, the girls happened to have two long weekends back-to-back that overlapped a work-trip of David’s to Orlando. We decided to surprise them with a Disney trip during this time as a Christmas present (we knew they would miss three days of school, but in terms of work vacation days and finances, this worked best for our family). The girls were thrilled...

Then, the date of the Science Fair was changed... was upset for several reasons. First, the reason given for the change was that students needed more time, and her partner had been working hard for weeks, and this did not seem “fair.” Then, of course, it meant she would miss the Fair entirely—and to complicate things further—for a reason she was not entirely comfortable with (that she was doing something she was “not supposed” to be doing: missing school for a family trip).

At first, David and I simply told her the reservations could not be changed, apologized, and told her we would not have planned the trip during her Science Fair on purpose (all true). She accepted this but remained sad. She talked openly about her feelings—this was her “one and only” Science Fair, she had worked so long and so hard, she didn’t want to let her partner down, she wanted to present her work. And we started to see the project take its finished form—more than 20 written reports on individual raptor species, hours of data collection being graphed, owl pellets dissected and bones bleached...

David and I started to rethink things...

Here was a child who was more passionate and engaged in her “real life” than about spending time in the Magic Kingdom—a quintessential Montessori “poster child” for whom the love/process of learning was everything. Wasn’t that most consistent with our family values, more important in terms of “life lessons” than family time in an amusement park?

So, we decided to offer her a choice: she could come back two days early from our trip if she wanted. There were several special events she would miss if she did this, which made it an even tougher decision. She thought about it for more than a week (until the airline deadline for changing tickets)—she didn’t want to let us down, didn’t want to let her partner down, didn’t want to miss shopping (yes, that was in there too). We all (including her partner, who was wholly supportive either way) encouraged her to make her choice based solely on what was most important to her.

So, she and David woke at 3:00 am to catch a 6:30 flight. has requested they stop off briefly at home so she can change into her “owl shirt” as she and her partner planned, and then she’s off to school for her “one and only” Science Fair Day.

I apologize for my long-winded nature, but wanted to relay the above because David and I continue to be amazed and humbled by who our child is becoming and we know that her school plays a huge part in this. It’s not every child that would make the above choice, but it’s also not just any school that would provide the environment to support and nurture such learning and passion.

So, thank you. Enjoy the day. I look forward to seeing the videos/photos from tonight that has promised to allow her father to take.

Best,
Tanya Bennett

Photos from the Science Fair on pages six and seven
Dancing across Cultures
The 2011 Biennial Gala of The Post Oak School | Feb. 4, 2011

Middle School Gala Project Update

by Middle School Students

We are currently in the process of buying our new water tanks for our rainwater collection system. We have already received connectors to attach the barrels to the drain pipe. The tanks should arrive by March 22, shortly after which we will begin installation. Our watering cans, as you saw samples of at the Gala, are being painted.

Thanks to everyone who supported our work at the Gala.

Auction Items for Sale

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.

Evening in India $50
Give your daughter the magical sights, sounds, and tastes of India—without a passport or jet lag! Winning bidder will enjoy an evening of cultural delights at the home of Post Oak parents Shonali and Rakesh Agrawal. Drop your child off on March 11, 2011 from 5:30–8:30 pm for a delicious Indian dinner, followed by dress-up in beautiful traditional attire and Indian jewelry. There will be henna art to decorate their hands and feet—and an Indian dance class to cap off this extraordinary night. Namaste! (One spot left. $50)

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! 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)

CPR Certification $40
[Donated by The Einstein Family, PerSys Medical Training Center] Do you have a future babysitter or lifeguard in the making? Give your child an extra boost of confidence with this CPR certification class. This is available to only 5 bidders at $40 each. Restrictions: Must be 10 years or older.

Peggy Hull Design Class at the Decorative Center $60
[Donated by Peggy Hull of Creative Touch Interiors] Get interior decorating tips from the ultimate expert. Former ASID president and owner of Creative Touch Interiors, Peggy Hull, will host an interior decorating class designed exclusively for this year’s Gala. Peggy will present “Ten Key Elements of a Well Designed Room” at The Decorative Center of Houston (10 spots remaining). Lunch will be provided at the Decco Cafe. Class will be held on March 24, 2011 from 9:30 to 1:00 pm. Guests will be allowed to tour the hundreds of showrooms after class and a raffle will be held for those in attendance.
The following brief letter was sent from parent Kim Yates to her child’s teacher, Erin Smith, and Head of School John Long.

Erin and John—

Thought you both would enjoy the attached picture of

Apparently Erin’s recent lesson on sandpaper letters really sparked an interest.

Kim Yates
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.

THE POST OAK DAD’S CLUB PRESENTS:

An Evening with CHRI$$ 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.

PROVENANCE VINEYARD
HEWITT VINEYARD

Light Hors d’œuvres
Everyone Welcome, But Space is Limited
RSVP to

Looking for old Cinco de Mayo pictures!

Dear Families:

This year we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of our Cinco de Mayo celebration at Post Oak. We are looking for previous Cinco pictures for our slide show and 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.

Many thanks,
The Primary Assistants
Upper Elementary Science Fair

Photo by Mirna Andrade-Salgado

Photo by Mirna Andrade-Salgado
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 overconsumption 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.

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**RODEO EXHIBITION**

Dust off your boots and head on over to Post Oak School to view the fabulous and award-winning rodeo drawings by our own Post Oak cowboys and cowgirls!

Students will be acknowledged for the awards received from the Houston Livestock Rodeo Committee, and their artwork will be returned with a certificate of participation.

**Tuesday**
**March 8**
**6:30–7:30 pm**
**In the library**

Presented by the Art Department

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**Bearkats volleyball**

Basketball has ended and we have stepped into our next sport, volleyball, which began March 3.

**Game schedule with St. Stephens:**
- Thursday, March 3
- Wednesday, March 9
- Wednesday, March 23
- Wednesday, March 30*

Post Oak Gym—4:15 pm

*After volleyball season ends, we will continue with flag football.
Come hear the Primary teachers speak about

**Peace Making—Conflict Resolution**

*Please save the date:*
*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.

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**F.I.S.H. Meeting**

(Families Integrating School & Home)

**Friday, March 11, 2011**

9:00 am

**Common Room**

“Coming full circle with children’s meals”

Teachers Phoebe Yeager, Julie Parraguirre, and Dinah Chretit share their experiences cooking with children in the classroom.

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**New bus!**

The Post Oak School has acquired a new bus to replace the older of our two buses. Money from the Post Oak Fund was used to make this purchase—Thank you!

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**Missed Alumni Night this year?**

*Go to the Post Oak Library and check out the video of it.*
1. The nuts and bolts of friendship.
2. Carrots for class: practicing cutting and control while providing friends with a snack.
3. Drawing the parts of a flower.
4. Using a large-grip square crayon develops concentration and hand-eye coordination.
5. Learning about and practicing capitalization.
7. Exploring new things in Infant Community.
8. Proper nouns and common nouns in Lower Elementary.
10. Showing a friend odd and even numbers.
11. Middle School students discuss answers to difficult questions from the Texas Math League.
13. Addition with the bead frame.
14. The human skeleton is a puzzle in Lower El—but we can surely put it together!
**NOTICE BOARD**

**Monday, March 7**

Conference Day: classes not in session—only students with expanded-year contracts attend

**POST OAK SCHOOL**

**SUMMER SCHOOL**

**FORM ONLINE NOW**

**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)

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