I love this time of year. I always have. I love that it gets dark earlier and cools down at night. I feel comforted by a warm beverage and wearing a scarf (and a good pair of boots). Daily I warm the mulling spices on the stove which brings back a flood of thoughts about being young and surrounded by family.

This season is often filled with so many sensorial encounters. For a young child these experiences are multi-dimensional. First, like a snap shot, he has the potential to take in each moment in its entirety; a complete capture of the exact scene. Any given moment is subject to the cataloging of taste, scent, sound, touch, and sight. These images are then stored and become part of his understanding of the world.

Additionally, the young child is often only able to respond to one stimulus at a time. So if he smells the pine trees, hears the music, and tastes the sugar cookies simultaneously, he can become over stimulated. It is important to acknowledge this. It may mean not rushing away from the carolers in order to see the next attraction or stepping back and...
How will they see the world when they are conscious? What filters will they create? As a parent, these are exciting and scary moments. How do I help my child create healthy filters, inclusive filters, non-judgmental filters?

I CAN ALLOW TIME FOR LIFE TO MAKE SENSE

I can give the gift of time together, collaboratively working on something, or side-by-side having parallel experience. I can give the time to show my child I value who he is as an individual and that he is good company. We can read books next to each other or bake cookies together. We can clean the fridge together, or rake side-by-side. Our contributions to family life together help us both feel an inner sense of accomplishment. He is proud to be contributing to the family, and I love to see my child wanting to contribute.

I can give the gift of time alone. I can respect the moments he needs to concentrate and not be interrupted by my words of encouragement. Although it may seem that he wants me to say “good job” he really just wants to focus and challenge himself. Allowing for this time shows my respect for his deep concentration and my understanding that his work is more important than my words. I let him discover his world at his own pace; each child has his own. I can honor that pace, allow the world to unfold before him. His own discoveries will teach him the most. He will learn about himself, he will learn trust in himself, in others, and in the world. He will have an innate trust in the world. (I love this idea.) By allowing my child to have time and discover himself, he will trust in himself and in the greater community.

I can give the gift of time with his siblings. They do not need me to moderate their connections. They need me to support them equally and respect the work they do to develop a strong bond. When they are together, they learn so much from each other and about each other. Each has a unique personality and role to play within his and her relationships. This emerges as they are free to explore without my interruption.

I can give the gift of the present moment. I can be here, with him, not on my email, or Facebook, or enjoying a text from a friend. I can put down my phone and be here. I am constantly reminded by his behavior that the gift of time matters more than anything else. When I am present, he is present, when I show empathy and engagement he does, too.

As we get into this holiday season and there are so many gifts to give and receive, I ask that you consider giving the gift of time. Your child is building himself, and the smell of warm cider as you share a cup, the sound of an airplane flying overhead as you make plans to travel, and the taste of peppermint in the cookies you make together can all become part of his understanding of the world. As a parent, it is such a gift to be a witness to the making of the next generation and their potential. Every moment could possibly become part of his personality, and these are the moments you can influence. I wish you all fond memories and special times for the holiday season and the New Year.

The Gift of Time by Sarah Moudry, continued from page 1
Infant Community Playscape

Have you had a chance to see the newest structure in the Infant Community playground? The \textit{Playscape} was designed by Infant Community teachers Deidre Lodrig, Sarah Moudry, and Upper Elementary director Jeff Schneider and built by Bill Hunter to satisfy the requirements of his Eagle Scout project. Bill, who is currently a senior at Episcopal High School, raised $1100 dollars and spent it all on materials which includes cedar and recycled plastic lumber.

Our sincere thanks go to Bill and all who gave hands-on assistance, including Bill’s dad, as well as Jeff Schneider and his son, Post Oak alum Nikhil Schneider (’08).
Post Oak Students Score Big Win

Upper Elementary students and his team, Houston Express 02B Green, placed first in the U11 Boys’ Bronze Cup at the Space City Futbol Club 8v8 Winter Break Cup 2012. Congratulations to the pair! 🏆

Sign up now for Spring ASEP classes!

Download the packet from the link on the left side of our homepage.
Registration forms are due by December 21.

Parent Honored

Congratulations to Post Oak parent and board member Mario Kapusta on being named as a Memorial Hermann Hospital Distinguished Physician. Honorees are physicians who have spent the majority of their professional careers at Memorial Hermann Hospital/Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital and made significant contributions to the hospitals during that time. 🎉

Bearkats Basketball

Come support the team!

WED., 1/16 vs. St. Stephens

TUES., 1/22 at St. Catherine’s, 5 p.m.

WED., 1/23 vs. St. Stephens

Home games start at 4:15 p.m.
Creating Innovators

From an interview with Tony Wagner, author of Creating Innovators: Raising Young People Who Will Change the World.

Wagner: I talked to a very wide range of young innovators in their 20s—some innovators in the so-called STEM field (science, technology, engineering and math), some who were artists and musicians and some who were social entrepreneurs. It was a demographically diverse and representative sample of young innovators out there. Then, as you point out, I talked to all of their parents, and then I asked each one of them—could they name a teacher or a mentor who had made the greatest difference in their lives in their development of their capacities to innovate? About a third of them could not name any teachers. They all could name at least some adult in their lives—two-thirds could name a teacher, the other third named mentors.

I interviewed each one of those teachers and mentors, trying to see if I could find the patterns of parenting and teaching that contribute the most to the development of a young innovator.

What I discovered is that in every single case, the teachers who had the most critical difference in the lives of these young innovators was an outlier in his or her education setting. Elementary school through graduate school, every single one of them was an outlier. What made them outliers were the ways in which they taught, and the ways in which they taught were very consistent with what I saw to be some of the practices in the leading educational institutions that produce innovators. I’m talking about Stanford’s d.school, the MIT Media Lab and above all, the Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering, which I also profile in the book.

I came to see that the culture of schooling in America is radically at odds with a learning culture that produces young innovators in five essential respects.

Number one: The culture of schooling is all about individual achievement, ranking kids, whereas, the culture of innovation demands collaboration. Every one of these teachers and classes I observed really build teamwork into all of their assignments.

Number two: A culture of schooling is all about specialization. While that certainly has a role in innovation, what’s very clear in the world of innovation is a problem-based, multidisciplinary approach to learning.

Number three: The culture of schooling is risk averse and penalizes failure. The culture of innovation is all about taking risks and learning from mistakes, trial and error.

Number four: The culture of schooling is a very passive experience, where people essentially sit all day consuming information and then regurgitating it. The culture of learning for young innovators is all about creating—not consuming—real products for real audiences.

And lastly, number five: The culture of schooling really relies on extrinsic incentives to motivate learning—carrots and sticks, As and Fs. But I discovered that these young innovators were far more intrinsically motivated, and when I looked at the pattern of what parents and teachers had both done to encourage intrinsic motivation, I found a kind of remarkable emphasis in the classrooms and among the parents of play, passion, and purpose.

... I discovered that these young innovators were far more intrinsically motivated, and when I looked at the pattern of what parents and teachers had both done to encourage intrinsic motivation, I found a kind of remarkable emphasis in the classrooms and among the parents of play, passion, and purpose.

Posted this week on Head of School John Long’s blog, Education by Design. Follow along at educationbydesign.blogspot.com.
Opportunities begin at $500 per couple. $1000+ underwriting levels are invited to an underwriting COCKTAIL RECEPTION January 16.

Download materials on the Gala page via a link on our homepage!

Still looking for “HOT STUFF” FOR THE SILENT AUCTION

TICKETS, TRAVEL, DINING, GIFT CARDS, & MORE

Contact the Development Office if you have access to great giveaways such as theater or sports tickets, gift certificates for dining and travel, or a stash of unused gift cards which could be donated to the silent auction.

Other ideas? Let us know!

Look for your GALA INVITATION at the beginning of the new year!

DISCO INFERNO $10,000
HOT STUFF $5,000
CELEBRATION $3,000
FUNKY TOWN $1,000
GOOD TIMES $500

Underwriting for Cool Cats

For details on underwriting benefits, go to our website: www.postoakschool.org/postoak/gala_2013.asp

Opportunities begin at $500 per couple. $1000+ underwriting levels are invited to an underwriting COCKTAIL RECEPTION January 16.

Download materials on the Gala page via a link on our homepage!

Last chance to Let us “ad” you to the Gala program

Advertising contract information AVAILABLE ONLINE via the 2013 Post Oak Gala weblink on our homepage.

Deadline is Dec. 14

Pam Griffin-Minnich
Belisa Diaz
Dawn Thomas

Don’t forget to Book your room!

Our block of rooms is reserved at $169/ room.
Say you’re with The Post Oak School!
Availability is limited so CALL THE HOUSTONIAN today.
713-680-2626

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2013
Post Oak alumni Joseph Rodd (pictured above with his step-father Doug Selman) recently celebrated his 25th birthday and was surprised with a keepsake from his parents. Joseph’s mother enlisted family members, teachers, scout leaders, and family friends who have known Joseph at some point in the past and played an important role in his life to send him birthday cards and/or personal handwritten letters. These letters filled a walnut keepsake box which was given to him on his birthday eve. Joseph’s mother followed up with all of the well-wishers, which included John Long, to let them know he was “genuinely surprised and touched” by the letters.

Joseph graduated with high honors in English from Rice University in 2010, and in August began teaching 12th grade English (regular and AP) at YES Prep Southwest, a Houston charter school serving disadvantaged students. For the past several months, Joseph has been working over 80 hours a week preparing to become a teacher and then beginning life as a teacher of teens, many of whom are immigrants with significant academic deficits and sometimes heartbreaking personal circumstances.

Post Oak wishes Joseph all the best in his teaching career!
Middle School Math Comics

THE ADDITIVE PROPERTY OF ZERO

ZED AHEAD. THEY NEVER GIVE ANYTHING BACK

\[ \text{631} \]

\[ \text{0} \]

Commutative property -

"Hey can you help me make a pb and j?"

"Sure!"

O.K. I'll go get all the ingredients. "Let's put the jelly on and then the peanut butter."

“No! It would be better if we do the peanut butter first!"

Hey Kids! It doesn't matter which one you put first, you will still get the same result in the end."
Attention all parents, send in your parenting questions now for a regular column which will begin appearing in 2013 here in The Weekly Post. Post Oak Counselor Phylis Tomlinson will offer guidance and advice on issues such as discipline, consequences, money and children, peer relationships, and more. Please include the gender and age of your child for an appropriate response—letters will be included anonymously in conjunction with Phylis’ response.

Send questions to: phylistomlinson@postoakschool.org.

FREE TICKETS
to college bowl game!

BBVA Compass has generously donated 10 tickets to see Texas Tech vs. Minnesota in the Meineke Car Care Bowl.

The game will be at Reliant Stadium on Dec. 28 at 8:00 p.m.

Visit the front office to claim tickets. First come, first served!

For more info on the bowl visit: meinekecarcarebowloftexas.com/

FOUND!

LUNCH BOXES, JACKETS, SWEATERS, AND MORE...

Missing something? Have a look online:

www.postoakschool.org/postoak/Photos_Lost_and_FOUND_Gallery.asp

If you recognize an item you can come reclaim it from the treasure chest in the front lobby. Please retrieve all items by Friday, December 21. Everything left over will be donated to charity over the winter break.

*If clothing or lunch boxes have a name written on it, the item is placed in your child’s cubicle/locker. It’s a good idea to mark special items so they always find their way home!

SAVE THE DATE!

Alumni Night
Best Night of the Year!

Thurs., Jan. 10, 2013 from 6:30–8:30 p.m.

We are excited to welcome back the high school students, college students, and young professionals who attended The Post Oak School as they reflect on their experiences in Montessori. How did their education at Post Oak help prepare them for their subsequent education and for life?

Parents of our current students as well as prospective parents are encouraged to attend this event.
1. Singing a song of thanks before snack in Infant Community.

2. A Primary student chooses a colorful wooden puzzle which helps with hand control and concentration.

3. Linear counting with the Tens Board prepares one to count to 100.

4. Writing is delightful with the Moveable Alphabet.

5. A Lower Elementary class runs through a series of exercises in PF.

6. Decorating boxes for the Braes Interfaith Ministry food drive. Look for information and photos next week.

7. At work on a Gala classroom art project.

8. Bearkats played their first home court basketball games this week.

9. Upper Elementary students fill the tile room to rehearse for their performance this week.
### CALENDAR

#### DECEMBER 16–22

- **Thur 12/20**  
  Fall ASEP ends

- **Fri 12/21**  
  Regular dismissal for all students  
  - Full day IC: 3:00 p.m.  
  - PRI & PHE: 3:15 p.m.  
  - EL, MS, HS: 3:30 p.m.  
  ASEP spring registration due (see page 4)  
  *Winter solstice*

#### DECEMBER 23–JANUARY 5

- Winter break  
  School closed

#### JANUARY 6–12

- **Mon 1/7**  
  Teacher in-service  
  School closed

- **Tue 1/8**  
  High School J-Term begins

- **Wed 1/9**  
  POPA Coffee/Work Day  
  8:45 a.m.–noon

- **Thur 1/10**  
  Alumni Night  
  6:30–8:30 p.m.

- **Fri 1/11**  
  Upper EL Spelling Bee  
  10–11:30 a.m.

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**NOTICE BOARD**

### WE NEED YOU!

50th Anniversary Committee  
Looking for Parent Volunteers

Contact Kathryn Murphy at kathrynmurphy@postoakschool.org.  
(2013–14 is our celebration year)

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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 p.m. on the Tuesday before publication to Communications Coordinator Elaine Schweizer (elaineschweizer@postoakschool.org). If publication is on a Thursday due to school closure on Friday, then the deadline is 5:00 p.m. on the preceding Monday.

All photos in *The Weekly Post* are by Elaine Schweizer 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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Fax: 713-661-4959  
[www.postoakschool.org](http://www.postoakschool.org)

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**Shopping for the Holidays?**

There’s an easy way to help raise money for our school—when you go shopping! Whether buying groceries at Randalls, back-to-school items at Target, or catching a great deal on MamaSource, your purchases can benefit Post Oak! Grandparents, alumni, and friends are all welcome to participate in the programs.