THE PRESENT

“Be here now,” school counselor Phylis Tomlinson says, challenging us to be fully present in the moment, fully attentive to the person or people we are with at the moment, fully open to the possibilities of the moment. It is an acknowledgement of what our teachers already know and do every day in the classrooms at Post Oak as they work with our students. It is the ultimate act of respect that faculty pay those students, and coincidentally, it is the ultimate act of respect that they pay to themselves as professionals and as human beings, because “be here now” is another way of describing “flow,” the psychological state described by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi when he studied scientists and

continued on page 2
artists at work. Our faculty are one part scientist and one part artist as they work in their classrooms, fully focused on the moment that they share with your children.

THE PAST
And then there are moments that invite us to shift our perspective, our scale, much as Charles and Ray Eames did in their short film, "Powers of Ten," and step out of the present to look backward or forward. This year, the school's golden anniversary, has provided opportunities to reframe annual events within an historical context, to celebrate the fifty year history of The Post Oak School, and to reflect upon the contributions of former faculty, parents and children over those five decades and how they prepared the ground for this present moment. We stand on their shoulders.

The year kicked off in grand fashion with a Jubilee evening at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Could we have found a better place to gather of current and past Post Oak parents, faculty, staff, trustees of its programs. The school offers an unique in its aspirations and the scope of its programs. The school offers an education grounded in the science of human growth and development for infants, children and adolescents, spanning the ages from birth to the onset of adulthood. To support and complement this work, the school houses a teacher training center and offers a rich variety of parenting courses and workshops. Looking to the future, the board and administration are re-working the plan to create campus facilities that will support and inspire our work in the future, and accommodate the programmatic growth and enrollment growth of both the past decade and the decade before us. Speaking at the Jubilee last fall, Board Chair Lloyd Kirchner reflected on this work:

"So where will we be, and where will this school be, fifty years from now? Is it up to us to decide that. We can either let life happen to us and to The Post Oak School, or we can make it happen, taking advantage of opportunities and creating strong, creative plans for the future. All of us are a part of it – every parent who brings their child to school each day, every child who learns something new and goes home excited about it, every teacher who sees each day as a new day and is creative in lesson presentations as well as in her responses to each and every child, every administrator who helps provide the structure and resources that support the magic that happens in the classroom, every donor who writes a check, every board member who struggles over things like the strategic plan and the budget, every person who digs deep to support Big Work, our capital campaign for The Post Oak School. We are all committed to providing an educational experience that will prepare our children to be citizens of the world, who will be ready, willing and able to embrace opportunities and address challenges.

It is an exciting thing to build a school, and that is what we are doing. We are building The Post Oak School for the next half century."

THE FUTURE
Even as we look back over Post Oak’s first fifty years, we look to the future. The recent additions of the high school division and the Houston Montessori Institute teacher training center broaden and deepen our programmatic scope and our vision of who we are as a school. Now more than ever, Post Oak is a beacon, a model for Montessori schools around the world, and for every school looking to the future, the board and trustees of its programs. The school offers an unique in its aspirations and the scope of its programs. The school offers an education grounded in the science of human growth and development for infants, children and adolescents, spanning the ages from birth to the onset of adulthood. To support and complement this work, the school houses a teacher training center and offers a rich variety of parenting courses and workshops. Looking to the future, the board and administration are re-working the plan to create campus facilities that will support and inspire our work in the future, and accommodate the programmatic growth and enrollment growth of both the past decade and the decade before us. Speaking at the Jubilee last fall, Board Chair Lloyd Kirchner reflected on this work:

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The Problem for Sports Parents: Overspending Large amounts of money can transform parental support into pressure

By Kevin Helliker, The Wall Street Journal (from May 12, 2014)

“When sports psychologist Travis Dorsch set about studying the effect of parental spending on young athletes, he expected to find a positive correlation. After all, recent research suggests that young athletes benefit from parental support. But his study, just completed, found that greater parental spending is associated with lower levels of young athlete enjoyment and motivation.

“When parental sports spending goes up, it increases the likelihood either that the child will feel pressure or that the parent will exert it,” says Dr. Dorsch, a Utah State University professor and former professional football player. The study adds to a small but growing body of research suggesting that parents ought to temper their investments in youth athletics. The problem, at root, isn’t financial. It is that big expenditures tend to elevate parental expectations. “The more parents do, the more they expect a return on their investment,” it becomes clear evidence to participate in 50 different projects by year end. In typical Post Oak fashion, 50 projects became 61: clear evidence of personal engagement and generosity of spirit."

“50 for 50” was the theme, as we challenged the community to participate in 50 different projects by year end. In typical Post Oak fashion, 50 projects became 61: clear evidence of personal engagement and generosity of spirit. The school offered an array of opportunities and workshops. Looking to the future, the board and administration are re-working the plan to create campus facilities that will support and inspire our work in the future, and accommodate the programmatic growth and enrollment growth of both the past decade and the decade before us. Speaking at the Jubilee last fall, Board Chair Lloyd Kirchner reflected on this work:

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..."
The first day, people started arriving at the airport at 6:00 a.m. sharp. Our flight was to depart at 7:35 a.m. We had to go through security first. That was pretty hard since we were a small group. We were a total of 26 sixth graders and seven adults.

Our flight was not directly to Williamsburg. Our first flight was to Washington, D.C., which took about two hours and thirty minutes to get there. On the flight, most of us brought either books or games to entertain ourselves or some people just took really long naps.

When we got off the plane in Washington, D.C., we immediately went to the gate. After we got to the gate some people went to Starbucks for a little snack because some people were hungry. After that we were boarding on the plane. One thing none of us realized until the last minute was that we were flying on a small plane. But thankfully it was only a twenty-five-minute flight to Richmond, Virginia. When we got to Richmond we got off the plane and headed to baggage claim. We were planning to go to lunch after that, but an unexpected delay with our rented vans occurred. The problem was that the people who we spoke with about the rented vans no longer had our reservation for our vans. So we ended up having to miss lunch and stay at the airport for about 1 to 2 hours because Mr. Pinto had to fill out all the forms for the vans all over again. Finally after everything was taken care of, we headed to our early dinner.

**DAY 1 OF WILLIAMSBURG**

Today we had to wake up at 4:00 a.m. We had to be at the airport at 6:00 a.m. sharp. Our flight was to depart at 7:35 a.m. We had to go through security first. That was pretty hard since we were a small group. We were a total of 26 sixth graders and seven adults.

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**DAY 1 OF WILLIAMSBURG**

Monday I woke up really tired. Ugh! Today's Monday. Wait—the day is to go to Williamsburg! My mom and I rushed out the house. “This is all going to be over faster than the one before, plus I fell asleep again. After the witch trials, we went back to the hotel, talked about our day, got ready for bed, and got some sleep to prepare us for the next big day ahead of us.

**DAY 1 OF WILLIAMSBURG**

On Monday May 5, 2014, the sixth grade class of The Post Oak School took a trip to Williamsburg to study the American Revolution. We flew on an United Airlines (Which probably wasn't around in the time of the American Revolution) then took buses to get to the Witch Trial, called “Cry Witch.” It was a mock trial with a jury, the Royal Governor (almost a judge), the attorney (a lawyer appointed by the King of England), the defendant (Grace Sherwood who was being accused of being a witch), and the witnesses. If you are one of the 22 people in line for the trial then you either get to be a member of the Governor’s Council who sits by the Governor, or the jury, who sits in a secluded box on the right side of the courtroom.

I was lucky enough to be one of the members of the Royal Governor’s council. I got to sit in the front of the room and decide on the fate of the witch. The attorney was arguing that Grace Sherwood was a witch, and called up 2 witnesses. The first witness was a man named Joseph Hill and he claimed Grace Sherwood brought plague on his crops. Then his wife came up and claimed Grace killed her unborn son. And another claimed she flew out of water when subjected to a swimming test. She acted very guilty, and she cursed everyone in the room, so we decided to vote guilty. It was great fun, and we learned a lot about how courts in the time of the colonies worked.

After dinner, we went to “Cry Witch.” “Cry Witch the Play” is a reenactment of a witch trial that actually happened in Virginia in 1707. We sat in the same seats the jury sat in over 300 years ago and heard the same things they heard years ago.

In the end, we decided that the defendant, Grace Sherwood, was guilty of witchcraft. According to historians, Grace Sherwood was found guilty by the court, but nobody knows if she got a pardon or if she was executed.

After the witch trials, we went back to the hotel, talked about our day, got ready for bed, and got some sleep to prepare us for the next big day ahead of us.

**DAY 1 OF WILLIAMSBURG**

By Wednesday we were very tired! We went to the Jamestown museum and saw short films of how Jamestown came to be. Later we went to do our interactive night activity. Then we went to get ice cream because it was Jonathan and Conner’s birthday! Then we went back to the hotel.

**DAY 2 OF WILLIAMSBURG**

On Tuesday night in Williamsburg we did an army boot camp called “In Defense of Our Liberty.” We walked into the place with another school and got split up into two groups. The groups were called first and second platoon. All the sixth graders from Mr. Pinto’s class were in second platoon. Then after we had to get in two lines, elbow to elbow, and watched how the soldiers would shoot their guns, they said that a good soldier would be able to load their musket in 15 or less seconds. Then we learned...
On Wednesday, May 7, 2014 the sixth grade went to a restaurant called Second Street and it was dinner at a restaurant called Second St and it was very dark and the stars lit up the sky as if there was no tomorrow! We arrived at the entrance and we said “Thank you” and we left to go back to the hotel to sleep.

On Wednesday, we woke up, ate breakfast and then went to Colonial Williamsburg. At 10:00 we experienced the storming of the palace. After that we went inside the palace and saw what the Governor’s life was like. Then we went inside a maze and played games. Then we went to listen to Thomas Jefferson speak. After we were done with that we went to go out and look at an amazing restaurant. Then we went to the public magazine, which is a place where they held the town’s military supplies. Then we went to the public county court house where they would do minor trials like not pay a fine. Then we visited a shop on a cabinet making. After that we went to see the jail and it was not a very comfortable place to stay! Then we went back to the visitor’s center in a bus.

On Thursday, May 8, 2014, we ate dinner at Christina Campbell’s tavern and then we went to hear ghost stories. They were amazing! Especially the one at the governor’s mansion. It was about a family that had 3 boys and they were all killed in the army and a girl who was in love with the youngest one tried to find out what had happened. My favorite was the one about Lucy Paradise, and she told a story about how she was kept in a mental asylum and they put her in a chair that had strips for the arms and a bucket in the middle so she could use the restroom. There was also a leather helmet that covered her face and her head. She told about the mental asylum and that the was left there for days, weeks, and months at a time. We also went to an act about a man that loved to gamble and then cursed himself by placing a bet and then she said “If I lose my eye balls will remain forever open and my body decay!” and of course he lost. The actors were so amazing!!! Afterward, we walked a mile back to the cars and then we left.

All of these stories were told in authentic 18th century English by actors who were fortunate to have experienced these stories as they were told in authentic cottages, which were built to show how people lived in the colonies in the late 1700’s.

On Wednesday, we took a 5 minute walk till we got to an fenced maze and played games. Then we went to listen to 3 ghost stories in 3 different houses.

The first one was by far the scariest. As we were walking to the first house, a lady dressed in black with black makeup circled our group. She looked mentally insane.

Our tour guide told us that the lady was called Lucy Paradise. Someone asked if it was the lady stalking us. She said yes. When we got into the house, I sat in the front row.

Lucy yelled a lot and made wild gestures that helped tell her life story and her time in the mental asylum/mental hospital. I was pretty scared.

After we left everyone was shaking. My knees were shaking so hard I had to hold on to my friends so I wouldn’t fall.

For the second story, though, I was smart enough to sit in the middle seat. This story was my favorite. That was the time I met Lucifer. He wasn’t as scary as Lucy Paradise and he didn’t scream. Instead he just smiled a big evil smile and kept on going with his story.

The third and last story was held at the Governor’s Palace. I forgot her name but she was THE creepiest lady I have ever seen. And she stamped her foot, a lot. At the end, we were all spritling to get away from her. Even though it was scary, I loved it.

Today was probably the most interesting day for me! We went to Yorktown, and saw how the soldiers lived during the war years. They showed us what they would do if someone had a cavity, and what they would do if they had an illness. They taught us how their kitchens looked like, and what and how they cooked. Then we saw how soldiers loaded their cannons. They also taught us how to load a musket, and how to shoot it.

Later on we went to lunch in a restaurant that had a magnificent view of the Atlantic Ocean! We got 15 minutes to play in the ocean, we had so much fun! After we got some time to play in the sea, we headed back to Yorktown to watch a movie. We saw the movie, and went back to Williamsburg where we ate a delicious dinner (and ice cream) at Christina Campbell’s Tavern. Then we had some time to play while we waited for the fabulous ghost stories.

While we were eating, Christina Campbell came out and gave us a brief history about her tavern, and about how The House of Burgesses would have secret meetings in her tavern because the governor had dissolved the group. She also told us that if you ever went into her tavern you would never find any woman because it was not proper for women to be out of their homes. Christina Campbell also taught the boys how to act like proper gentlemen, and that whenever we ladies needed to get up that they needed to take our chairs.

I learned a lot and had lots of fun. It was a really great experience.

On Thursday, our group stayed up till midnight. It wasn’t until we just got into bed that I realized, since it was past midnight, it was my birthday! I started the day by singing at midnight, “Happy birthday to me, happy birthday to me, happy birthday to me” By that time, the rest of the girls in my room realized that since it was past midnight, it was my birthday!!

I also woke up to people singing to me. The day started off well. We had a quick breakfast, then we went to the visitor’s center to watch a movie called A Patriot is Born. It was about a man who was elected to be in the House of Burgesses. He had to make a decision on whether to be a free country or be part of England. After the movie, we went to the museum to see all the interesting items there, and also the biggest magnolia tree! The items that I remember the most in the museum were the replicas of different swords that we could hold the handle of. We were all looking forward to our next activity, seeing the mental asylum.

On Thursday, we heard ghost stories, and one of them was about a lady named Lucy’s Ledum Paradise. She lived for some time in a mental asylum. Seeing the asylum was a little creepy after we heard that story. Luckily, we went to a more calming place after the asylum: the oldest functioning church in New England. It was a grand place, and we even got to see where Thomas Jefferson and other famous leaders sat.

Next, we went to the candy shop! As we entered, the aroma of sugar reached our noses, our eye’s didn’t know where to look first, and our hands (or at least my hands) were feeling the force. I managed to limit myself to three items: a chocolate frog from Harry Potter, Bertie Bott’s Every Flavor (jelly) Beans (When they say Every Flavor bean, they mean every flavored bean! I once got one that was soap-flavored), and of course, salt water taffy.

We reluctantly left the candy shop to go to a much less exciting place: the airport. The airport was like all the other times you go there, lots of food, rushing, waiting in line, and my least favorite, sitting. I was very glad when we landed. After I took my bag from the baggage claim, I waited anxiously for my family.

I was just about to call them, when I saw them come out of the elevator to greet me. It was the best birthday present of the day.
Camp Allen Memories

My 5 favorite things I did at Camp Allen are:
1. Catching bugs and looking at them
2. Making up skits
3. Going to the camp fire and roasting marshmallows
4. Playing the team game Cities
5. Playing volleyball in free time
I wish I could go back!!

My 5 favorite things I did at Camp Allen are:
1. Getting to know the other third graders so much better
2. Catching bugs
3. Making and eating s'mores
4. Making up skits
5. Playing Cities
It was so much fun!

WHAT’S HAPPENING NOW!

The POST OAK HIGH SCHOOL

MOVING UP
Post Oak High School welcomes and as rising 9th graders from the 8th grade class of 2014. We are all excited to welcome the incoming class of 2018!

MAGNA CARTA BLOG
Four POHS students, who have dubbed themselves the “Magna Carta Clan,” attended docent training sessions for the new HMNS exhibit. Now that their training is complete, the students have been leading tours for multiple age groups and answering questions for those roaming around the exhibit. Read all about their experience at http://pohsmagnacartahmns.blogspot.com/

END-OF-YEAR RETREAT
Post Oak High School students are excitedly anticipating next week’s end-of-year retreat at Camp Tejas. The retreat was organized by a committee of both students and faculty, and will include a number of outdoor activities including swimming, boating, and hiking.

POHS Student Appreciation Event
On Thursday, May 22, the high school students and rising 9th graders had a chance to get together and relax on the high school grounds. They sat on blankets, played football, enjoyed music, and ate grilled cheese sandwiches from a local food truck as they reminisced on the school year and the goals that they helped accomplish together.
A Letter from Our POPA Chairs

Dear Post Oak Community,

As the school year and our 50th anniversary celebration draw to a close, we thank the community for joining together to support The Post Oak School. From the lively Jubilee to the fabulous Birthday Bash to a hero-ific Book Fair, everyone from our infants to our grandparents enjoyed our year-long celebration. Thank you to our POPA event chairs, room parents, monthly coffee volunteers, 50th anniversary committee, “Post” contributors and everyone who lent a hand this year inside the classroom and behind the scenes. The Post Oak Parent Association always delivers.

The fun never stops around The Post Oak School and next year is no exception. The biennial gala chaired by Laura Citardi and Whitney Walsh will be an event not to be missed. The Parent Association is vital to making the gala a success - so please volunteer!

If you were unable to attend the Volunteer Appreciation Event on May 14, we missed you. Don’t miss out - please stop by the Development Office and pick up your “thank you” baseball cap so you have a bit of Post Oak to carry with you on your summer vacation.

It has been a pleasure working with you in support of our wonderful community at Post Oak. We look forward to seeing you next fall.

Sincerely,

Jessica Gregg and Suzan Samuels

News from Post Oak’s Green Team

Our visit from Jaime Gonzalez back in April has had a profound and lasting effect on the Green Team. We have found ourselves wildly combing the internet for more facts and opportunities for us to assist in the “re-wilding” of Houston’s native areas. One of the dominant themes of Jaime’s presentation was the importance of feeding our native fauna their corresponding native flora. He posits that the plants we buy from big-box retailers, while beautiful, are veritable wastelands for our native butterflies, hummingbirds, and bees. Because these plants are engineered to be more hardy or more prolific, the engineering takes its toll on the pollen production of the plant. Often times these plants, because they have been treated with pesticides, can actually be killers to our local pollinators.

Planting from native sources may not be the first thing we think of when running to a big box is such the norm in Houston, but it certainly is easy to do. Buchanan’s Native Plants in the Heights is an amazing local resource for young and mature plants. If you get so involved that you want to plant from seed, or if you’re just a master gardener like that, Native American Seed (www.seedsource.com) is the way to go. You can find photos and descriptions of plants native to our ecoregion here: http://prairiepartner.org/page/coastal-prairiebasics. Choosing to plant native is so easily done, we wonder why we didn’t make the switch earlier!
Parenting the Love and Logic Way® Summer Series  
presented by Phylis R. Tomlinson, LPC, LMFT, ATR-BC  
Post Oak Counselor & Independent Facilitator of Parenting the Love and Logic Way® curriculum

A parenting program designed by Love and Logic®. This series of courses offers solutions for families of children from early childhood to beyond adolescence. Previous participants are encouraged to return to share experiences and reinforce skills. Grandparents and other care givers are also welcome. All classes are open to the public.

LEARN THE PARENTING SKILLS TO:
• Gain respect and cooperation
• Reduce arguing
• Have a more peaceful household
• Have more family fun together
• Prepare your children for success in school and the "real world"

This parenting program is designed to give you practical skills that can be used immediately!

TO RESERVE YOUR SPACE:
Send a check payable to:
Phylis R. Tomlinson  
5215 Mimosa Drive  
Bellaire, TX 77401

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTING THE LOVE & LOGIC WAY®
Some Parents...
...request individual "coaching"  
...arrange a group of 6 to meet in Phylis’ office  
...arrange a group in their home, church or synagogue.

SUMMER FULL COURSE AT THE POST OAK SCHOOL
Wednesday, June 11, 18, 25, July 2 (4 weeks)  
11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.  
Brown Bag Lunch: Bring lunch & drinks  
$80 for entire 4-week series  
Workbook fee $15  
Drop-in fee $30 per session

LOCATION
The Post Oak School  
4600 Bissonnet St. at Ave. B  
(Clases will be held in the Multi-Purpose Room. Childcare not provided.)

Drop-ins welcome

WHERE ARE THEY HEADED?
Post Oak Alumni College Acceptances
2010 graduates have been accepted to the following colleges:

• Baylor University
• Boston University*
• College of Charleston
• Columbia University
• Dartmouth College
• Elon University
• George Washington University
• Lafayette College
• Northeastern University
• Pepperdine University
• Princeton University
• Rhodes College
• Santa Clara University
• Southern Methodist University*
• Stanford University*
• Texas Christian University
• Trinity University
• Tulane University
• University of California Santa Barbara*
• University of California Santa Cruz
• University of Kansas
• University of Miami
• University of North Carolina
• University of Richmond*
• University of Tulsa
• Vanderbilt University

Congratulations to our Post Oak alumni!
1. One of our youngest students develops fine motor skills through working with scissors.

2-3. Scenes from Middle School's volunteer service trip to the Chinese Community Center.

4. A Lower Elementary student returns the volume cubes to their storage case.

5. A three year old Primary student builds words with the movable alphabet.

6. Upper Elementary students test the physical requirements of establishing an electrical circuit.

7. Working with hand-sewing materials in a Primary classroom.

8. A lighthearted moment in High School science discussions.

9. Upper Elementary students practice their lines for their class play.

10. An older Primary child works on multiplication (9’s) with the bead bars.

11. Exploring mathematics in Lower Elementary using the bead frame.
CALENDAR

MAY 25 - 31

Mon 5/26
Memorial Day
SCHOOL CLOSED

Wed-Thu 5/28-29
High School Retreat
Middle School to The Retreat at Artesian Lakes

Fri 5/30
Last Day of School
Early Dismissal
11:20 - Infant Community
11:30 - Primary
12:00 - Elementary and Middle School
High School Families
Evergreen Pool Picnic
Noon
Eighth Grade
Moving Up Ceremony
6:30 p.m.

JUNE 1 - 7

Mon-Wed 6/2-6/4
Teacher In-Service Days

Thu-Fri 6/5-6/6
School Closed

LOOKING AHEAD

Mon 6/16
Houston Montessori Institute
Summer cycle begins
Summer School begins

NOTICE BOARD

FOUND!

LUNCH BOXES, JACKETS, SWEATERS, AND MORE…

Missing something?
Have a look online:
www.postoakschool.org/postoak/
Photos_Lost_and_Found_Gallery.asp

Please retrieve all items by Friday, May 30.
Everything left over will be donated to charity.

*If an item of clothing or lunch box has 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!

Nanny Needed

The Besselman family would like to hire a nanny 4 days a week, Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., in the Braes Heights area. Ideal candidate is well-organized, proactive and engages in educational/interactive play with children. Minimum 3 years experience caring for infant/toddler children and clean driving record required, experience with Montessori household a plus. Please contact Ashley at 713. 304.3046.

ABOUT THE POST

The Post is distributed via email every other Friday of the regular school year.
You can receive a printed copy from your oldest child, or view the PDF version online.

Submit letters, articles, or photos in electronic form by 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before publication to Communications Coordinator Elisa Schmidt (elisaschmidt@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.

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

Be sure to look for the special summer edition of The Post in mid-July!