Monique was surprised. Many calls were coming in to the Red Cross with contributions for the Haiti earthquake relief effort, but this one caught her off guard. Sydney is only 10 years old and she was speaking to Monique about a donation. Children just don’t make those calls, and on top of that, Sydney and her classmates had raised the consequential sum of $4,449.55. Where did that come from?

Where did that come from? This was not just one extraordinary child’s idea. It was more like spontaneous combustion. After the earthquake, in fact, on the very next day, six or eight Upper Elementary children came to school with the idea of holding a bake sale to raise money—and in addition another group organized a collection of food and clothing.

This article was first published January 27, 2010.
They saw a need, responded with empathy, said to themselves, “We can do something,” and then did it. There were many skills involved: planning, advertising and promotion, scheduling, organizing, pricing and merchandising, counting and managing money, working as a team, and of course, calling Monique.

And where did it come from, this desire to help, and the initiative to do so?

A parent called me last week. Her five-year-old daughter, Diana, was at gymnastics class, waiting in the play area for her class to begin. Another mother came into the building with two young children. She looked here and there, and finally said to her children, “Maybe the rest rooms are over here.”

Diana jumped up from where she was playing and went to the mother. “Wait a minute,” she said, “the rest rooms are over this way. Let me show you.” Diana led the mother and children to the rest room and then returned to the toy she had been playing with.

She didn’t look for her own mother’s praise or approval. In fact, she didn’t learn that her mother had actually noticed her helpful act until mom told dad at the dinner table.

Diana’s mom said to me, “You might be concerned about ‘stranger danger,’ but I’ve always told Diana, ‘If you ever get lost, look for a mother with young children and ask for help.’ So she must have had that idea in mind, and I certainly felt she showed good judgment in offering to give help in that situation. I was just amazed at how spontaneous an action this was, demonstrating initiative, helpfulness, self-confidence, and empathy.”

So here we have a primary child spontaneously offering to help a mother and her children, and groups of elementary children planning a relatively complex project to provide help for Haitian people 1,600 miles distant. Where do these actions come from?

For children in a Montessori classroom, 1,000 insignificant acts over a period of years lead to the empathic recognition that someone needs help, to the self-confidence that says “I know how to help,” and the initiative to take action. 1,000 insignificant acts form a person of character and a person of action. 1,000 acts so insignificant that you might not even recognize them for what they are and where they are leading—even if you were standing outside a classroom watching.

I watched today as a four-year-old boy leaned his whole body weight into the door leading from his classroom to the garden. The door yielded to his efforts and when he stepped into the garden, he picked up a hoe and began digging in the dirt. His teacher glanced over and noticed. No one else paid any attention. I saw one child making one step on the road to adult effectiveness, toward the recognition that he can choose an action and carry it out, even if there are barriers in the way such as a heavy door.

I watched today as a five-year-old was counting one of the number chains. He was looking for the label “210” but it wasn’t there. What did he do? He cut a small piece of paper and wrote on it “2-1-0.” He needed this label to finish his work, and knew he had the skill and the materials to make the label himself. He took action. At the same time, because of conversations his teacher has had with the class, he knew that this would help the class: the next child to count the chain would use the ticket he made. He knew that he was helping himself and helping others, too. Did anyone notice this insignificant act? Only I was there to see.

I watched today as a five-year-old took the hand of a two-year-old and walked her back to her classroom. She had been visiting the Primary classroom that will soon be hers. But today she was returning to the classroom that is still hers. The five-year-old is an “older child” in her Primary classroom, one of the competent elders of the group, a leader, and therefore among those the teacher turns to when help is needed. In a Montessori classroom with a three-year age span, children enter with a group of “youngest children;” the following year they become “middle children;” and in their last year with the class, become the “oldest children.” They learn to receive help and to give help. Over and over this happens, each and every day, in notable and inconsequential ways, until giving and receiving help become part of the fabric of who the child is, and who the man becomes.

We often hear that Montessori children are different. This is one way they are different and how, through 1,000 insignificant acts, it happens.

© John Long and The Post Oak School
Lending a Hand over Spring Break

Post Oak parent Michelle Luo sent us these photos and a note:
I just want to share with you pictures of hard working Post Oak children and staff members at the Houston Food Bank on Monday, March 14.

That morning, along with other volunteers from the Greater Houston area, they packed over 2,400 food bags that will be sent to kids whose families are in need. They also helped sort over 11,000 pounds of food donated to the food bank.

They were the youngest volunteers that day. They collaborated together just like they did in classrooms. All the children are delighted that they got the chance to work together to help those in need.

Thank You,
Post Oak!

Thanks to your kindness, we collected over 200 cases of water for Post Oak parent Sunny Taj’s relief effort Case For A Hug to help those affected by Flint’s water crisis. Sunny delivered the cases to a senior facility, reporting that they were extremely grateful.
Storytime Underground

The March issue of School Library Journal has an article titled “The Best Early-Learning Blogs,” naming our own Post Oak librarian Cory Eckert. Cory says, “The list includes many colleagues I’ve worked closely with, and lists my website, Storytime Underground.”

“The brainchild of Cory Eckert, this is home base for a cadre of talented youth librarians who believe fully in the motto ‘sharing is caring.’ Seriously, the site is packed.”

Visit storytimeunderground.org.

Storytime with Cory

A new theme each time, including...

farm animals, bedtime, & food

March 30, April 6, and April 13
at 2 p.m. in the Post Oak Library

For parents and children in Young Children’s Community & Half-Day Primary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Event kicks off!</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30–1:00</td>
<td>Storytime with Cory</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00–1:30</td>
<td>Photo op with Elephant and Piggie</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–2:30</td>
<td>Storytime with Cory</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00–5:00</td>
<td>“I wrote that book!” Book display and readings Ukulele Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00–7:00</td>
<td>Graphic Novel Artist Kory Merritt talks about Poptropica: Mystery of the Map</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00–9:00</td>
<td>Middle and High School Poetry Slam, music, Middle School micro-economy sale.</td>
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Join us all day for books, activities, a crêpe stand, and more (including taking a photo with some of your favorite picture book characters)!
Good Luck to Our Triathletes!

On April 23 or 24, several of our Elementary students will participate in what is expected to be the largest USATriathlon sanctioned kids triathlon in the world with more than 3,000 participants ages six to 15. For information about the event, visit www.kidstriathloninc.org/houston-kids-triathlon.html.

Pictured above: Elementary students

Good luck, all!
Congratulations to The Post Oak School Odyssey of the Mind team! The team placed fifth out of 17 teams in the regional competition and advanced to the state competition which will be held April 16.

Team members are: [names redacted], and [name redacted] (from Frostwood Elementary).

Odyssey of the Mind is a worldwide creative problem solving and critical thinking competition. Team members solve problems that range from building mechanical devices to presenting their own interpretation of literary classics, then bring their solutions to competitions on the local, state, and world level. Odyssey of the Mind teaches students how to think divergently, identify challenges, and creatively solve those problems. The creative process rewards thinking "outside of the box."

If you are interested in learning more about Odyssey of the Mind contact Post Oak parent Emily Weinstein at [email redacted].

Wed., April 6, 8:45 a.m.–noon
Bissonnet campus
SAVE THE DATES

for

JOHN LONG’S RETIREMENT PARTIES
{21 YEARS AT THE POST OAK SCHOOL}

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2016
THE POST OAK SCHOOL
4600 BISSONNET STREET
4 TO 6 P.M.
ALL AGES WELCOME

SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2016
SILVER STREET STUDIO
2000 EDWARDS STREET
6:30 TO 11 P.M.
ADULTS ONLY
### COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

Brandeis University; Champlain College; Dickinson College; Lawrence University; Lewis & Clark College; Mount Holyoke College; Northeastern University; Pepperdine University

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<tr>
<th>College</th>
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<td>Appalachian State University</td>
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<td>Barnard College</td>
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<td>of Columbia University*</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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<td>Babson College</td>
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<td>Baylor University</td>
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<td>High Point University</td>
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<td>University of Houston</td>
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<td>University of Mississippi</td>
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<td>The University of the South (Sewanee)</td>
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<td>The University of Southern California</td>
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<td>The University of South Carolina</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
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<td>The University of Tennessee</td>
<td>Missouri</td>
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<td>The University of Texas at Austin, Cockrell School of Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willamette University</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
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<tr>
<td>The University of Vermont</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
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We’ll keep you updated throughout the year as they come in. *Student has committed.

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### IB Information Night

Families of rising High School Juniors are encouraged and all Post Oak families are invited to attend, on Thursday, April 21 from 5 to 6 p.m. at the High School. The presentation will include a general introduction to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, an explanation of its role as an integral component of the Post Oak High School curriculum, and a preview of student life in the junior and senior years. Current 11th and 12th grade students and key faculty will be present to answer all your questions! ▶

### HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION OPEN HOUSE

Tues., April 5, 7 p.m.
1102 Autrey St., Houston
Young Children’s Community
Parent Education Dates

Thursday, April 7 at 2 p.m.
Language Development
facilitated by Emily Hansen

Thursday, April 21 at 2 p.m.
Social/Emotional Development
with Our Very Young Children
facilitated by Deidre Brooks, Sue Guerrero, and Emily Hansen

Redirecting Children’s Behavior—Nanny Class
with Deborah Fry, Ph.D., C.P.E.

Thursdays,
April 7, 14, 21, & 28
9:15 to 10:45 a.m. at The Post Oak School

$150 per person/$275 for two
(class size limited to 12 participants)

Register at www.deborah-fry.com
or call Deborah Fry at 713-840-8663

• Practice a consistent set of guidelines which harmonize with the approach your child experiences at school everyday
• Use positive language to redirect children’s behavior
• Encourage child’s self-care skills and sense of responsibility
• Reduce sibling rivalry
• Interact to build self-esteem

The class will be taught in English; however, the workbook is available in Spanish if requested.
ANNUAL SPRING ENVIRONMENTAL LECTURE

HOW WE CAN UNLEASH OUR HOMES & CARS FROM FOSSIL FUELS

WITH DR. DANIEL COHEN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, RICE UNIVERSITY

THURS., APRIL 21 7 TO 8 PM
POST OAK HIGH SCHOOL 1102 AUTREY STREET

PLUS POST OAK STUDENTS’ EV CAR CONVERSION AND A LINE UP OF ELECTRIC CARS, INCLUDING TESLA & LEAF.

Post Oak Dads’ Club presents
Family Movie Night

FRIDAY, APRIL 8 at STAY TUNED FOR DETAILS

BRING YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY!
CONGRATULATIONS
to classes reaching
100% PARENT PARTICIPATION:
  Rebecca Duran
  Sue Guerrero
  Emily Hansen
  Lindsay Mistretta
  Debbie Nickerson
  Errol Pinto
  Maya Pinto
  Simran Sood
  Anita Taj Mahmood
  Tamara Townsend
  Miriam Winton
  9th Grade
  11th Grade

2015–2016 PARTICIPATION TO DATE

TRUSTEES 100%
EMPLOYEES 100%
PARENTS 93%

93% and Growing!

Please send in your contribution today to support the school and get your class to 100% participation.

The development office continues to reach out to the remaining families. Please show your support of The Post Oak School by making your Annual Fund contribution today online, via pledge, securities, or check.

THANK YOU!

YOUR MATCHING GIFT CAN MAKE YOU A LEADERSHIP CIRCLE MEMBER. JOIN IN THE FUN AT THE LOYA’S PARTY!

POST OAK FUND CHAIRS
LUCINDA & JAVIER LOYA
INVITE YOU TO THE
Leadership Circle Party

Contributors to the Post Oak Annual Fund at the Leadership Circle level ($3,000) are invited to join Lucinda and Javier Loya at their home for the annual, fabulous Leadership Circle Party in April.

Don’t miss it!
High School A-Term Presentations
Thurs., April 7 at 10 a.m.
Museum District campus

Important Dates

2016 END OF YEAR

- May 26: Last day of school and HS Commencement
- May 27: In-service day
- May 30: Memorial Day—school closed
- May 31 & June 1: In-service days
- June 6: Summer school & HMI begin

2016–2017 CALENDAR SUMMARY

- Aug. 5: Summer school & HMI ends
- Aug. 15: Faculty/staff return
- Aug. 23: Middle & High School students return
- Aug. 29–Sept. 2: First week for all YCC, PRI, and EL students
- Sept. 5: Labor Day—school closed
- Oct. 10: Columbus Day—school closed
- Employee retreat/in-service
- Nov. 23–25: Thanksgiving Break—school closed
- Dec. 16: Early dismissal
- Dec. 19–30: Winter Break—school closed
- Jan. 2: Teacher In-Service—school closed
- Jan. 16: Martin Luther King Jr. Day—school closed
- Feb. 20: Presidents’ Day—school closed
- Mar. 13–17: Spring Break—only students with expanded-year contracts attend
- April 14: Good Friday—school closed
- May 26: Last day of school

Coffee with the MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Tues., April 5 at 9 a.m.
at the Bissonnet campus
1–3. Young Children’s Community: students work with focus, developing fine motor skills through activities such as collage, preparing snack, and caring for the environment.

4. A Primary student concentrates on his embroidery project with skillful attention.

5. Working with the chain of six gives these Primary students a visual representation of multiples.

6. Who’s ready for Bookapalooza?

7. Primary students work together to prepare their environment.

8. Building clay figures in Lower Elementary.

9. Simran Sood’s class performing “Stone Soup” at Brazos Bend State Park.

10. Upper Elementary students spend some time working individually on projects.

11. A Middle School student works on a backdrop for the upcoming play, *Man of La Mancha*.

12. High School students delve into their A-Term project in 3D printing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 27</td>
<td>Easter</td>
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</table>
| Mar 30 | Class pictures  
Storytime with Cory  
2 p.m. in the Library |
| Mar 31 | HS A-Term ends |
| Apr 1 | Conference Day  
YCC & HS in session  
PRI, EL, & MS not in session: only students with expanded year contracts attend |
| Apr 5 | Coffee w/ the Middle School & High School Directors  
9 a.m. (Bissonnet campus) |
| Apr 6 | HS Admission Open House  
7 p.m. (Museum District campus)  
Storytime with Cory  
2 p.m. in the Library  
Pathways to Independence  
6:45 p.m. (Museum District campus) |
| Apr 7 | Nanny Class: Redirecting Children's Behavior (1 of 4)  
9:15–10:45 a.m.  
($ and reg. required) |
| Apr 8 | Conference Day  
Classes not in session: only students with expanded year contracts attend  
Dads’ Club Movie Night |

**NOTICE BOARD**

**Shopping for Spring?**

There’s an easy way to help raise money for our school—when you go shopping! Whether buying groceries at Randalls or gifts, spring cleaning items, and school supplies at Target, your purchases can benefit Post Oak! Grandparents, alumni, and friends are all welcome to participate in the programs. We truly appreciate all your support! Happy shopping! 😊


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**Class Pictures**

**Wed., March 30**

**Bissonnet Campus**

**NEW DATE FOR HIGH SCHOOL CLASS PHOTOS!**

**Thurs., April 28**

**High School**

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**ABOUT THE POST**

The Post appears every other Friday 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.

The Post Oak School was founded in 1963 and accredited by both the International Baccalaureate Programme (IBO) 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