

# THE COUGAR BEAT

August 31, 2009

## From the Principal

At HCE, we offer Spanish instruction to our students in grades K-5. Foreign language programs can be found in 25%-30% of all public and private schools in the US. The teaching of Spanish began at our campus in 2003. Our current program was designed to provide students with some fluency in the language; help students learn about different cultures; provide learners with an enlarged vision of the world; and motivate them to continue foreign language study in middle school, high school, and beyond.

Our program emphasizes the integration of the four abilities related to foreign language acquisition including reading, writing, listening and speaking. Studies show that children exposed to a second language, prior to adolescence, are much more likely to have native-like pronunciation. In addition, research shows that studying a second language can lead to increased cognitive development in areas such as creativity and higher-order thinking skills. Furthermore, learning a second language at a young age can afford our students an opportunity to be more open to other cultures and appreciate diversity. Finally, knowing a second language can ultimately provide an evident advantage when seeking employment once our students reach adulthood.

We encourage all parents to talk with their children about the Spanish instruction they are receiving each week. Students in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade visit Spanish twice a week for a total of 45 minutes, while our 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students attend class once a week for 45 minutes.

Several ideas to consider to support and encourage the learning of a second language at home include checking out bilingual stories from the library, visiting events in the city that highlight the music, dance and language of other cultures, and listening to multicultural music on the radio or CDs.

Viva el español!

## Calendar

- 9.1 1st Day Packets due
- 9.3 Library Volunteer Orientation 2:00pm . Library  
Scout Night 6:00 . 7:00pm
- 9.4 Room Parent Orientation  
9:00am . Cafeteria
- 9.7 Holiday . Labor Day
- 9.8 Parent Orientation  
6-7 pm K & 1st
- 9.9 Parent Orientation  
5-6 pm 4th & 5th  
6-7 pm 2nd & 3rd
- 9.10 Lunch with Heroes
- 9.22 PTA Meetings  
10 am Denise Janowski house  
6 pm Library
- 9.24 PTA Planning Forum

**PAWS FOR SAFETY**

LOVE YOUR CHILD AND  
TURN YOUR CELL PHONE OFF  
DURING STUDENT DROP OFF  
AND PICKUP



## *Newcomer's News*

To those of you who are new to Hunters Creek this year – WELCOME! We are excited to have you and your children at HCE and hope you will quickly feel right at home. This column of the newsletter is especially for you. Some of the things you read in the newsletter may not be self-explanatory and the goal of this column is to explain these things.

The calendar on the first page of the newsletter contains upcoming events in the next month. For example, in last week's calendar you may have seen the Grade Level Orientations. Most of you attended the New Parent Orientation on August 20<sup>th</sup>, where you were given a general overview of school policies and PTA activities. During the Grade Level Parent Orientations, you will learn about the curriculum objectives and other specifics for your child's grade. The grade level teaching teams will host these meetings and answer your questions.

Hopefully you noticed "The Auction" advertised in the newsletter. The Auction is the PTA's primary fundraiser. This year's auction, "Rock the Night Away" will be held at the Forest Club on Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. The evening will be filled with great company, delicious food, rockin' good music and a variety of auction items all benefiting our school. It will also offer grade and classroom items featuring your children's work. There will be teacher, children and parent hosted parties so don't miss your chance to sign up for these exciting and popular events. Please mark your calendars and join us for this fantastic night and help us make HCE Rock!

As a new family at HCE, hopefully you have taken advantage of the Buddy system. This program matches new families attending HCE for the first time with returning families. The buddy family's role is to give you a point of contact at the school, to answer any questions you may have and tell you about upcoming events. Please contact Laurel Sidney at [steve\\_laurel@msn.com](mailto:steve_laurel@msn.com) or Mary Kay Nafaa at [mknafaa@comcast.net](mailto:mknafaa@comcast.net) if you would like to have a buddy family.

I hope all of you will attend the Back- To-School Coffees held September 8-17th. These grade specific get-togethers will take place after drop off in HCE family homes and are a great way to meet parents and sign up to help in your child's classroom, to read in the library or to help with classroom parties.

Finally, our first PTA meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 22nd at 10 am at the home of Denise Janowski, 7614 Brykerwoods, followed by an evening meeting at 6 pm in the Library. I hope you will join us for one of these meetings to learn about our school's programs, events and ways to become involved at HCE.

Once again, welcome to Hunters Creek and I look forward to meeting each of you this year!

***Julie White***

HCE PTA President

# Student Data Verification Form

Each student will bring home a **Student Data Verification Form and Parent Authorization Form** on Tuesday, September 2nd. Please update the information directly on both forms and return them via your child's backpack by Tuesday, September 8th.

All forms must be returned to the registrar even if no changes are made. Once all the data is entered, a student directory will be produced and distributed to the parents who purchased directories via the PTA order form.



SAVE THE DATE  
INNISBROOK GIFT WRAP

STARTS SEPTEMBER 28<sup>th</sup>

Go on-line to [www.innisbrook.com](http://www.innisbrook.com)  
to view the new catalog

Elizabeth Darnall 713-254-9811  
Cindy Pappas

## HCE SWEATSHIRTS

Sprit Sweatshirts are available for purchase on First Day Packet order forms. A sample is on display in the front office. Don't forget this is your chance to order sweatshirts for this year. Deadline for orders is Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>!

Dear Parents,

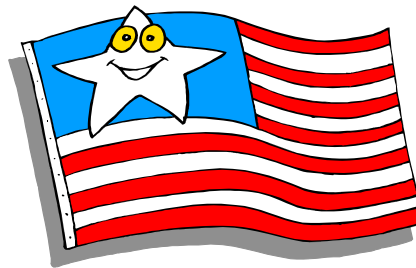
Welcome back! As we begin a new school year I would like to take this opportunity to share some information about attendance at Hunters Creek. The Texas Education Code requires compulsory attendance. This means that any child enrolled in a public school must attend class at least 90 percent of the school year (180 days). In addition, public schools are accountable for attendance under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. This act states that public schools are evaluated for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the area of attendance for elementary grades. In order to achieve a gold performance acknowledgement, which is the highest rating, we must have our children attending school 97 percent of the school year. Our goal this year is to achieve the gold performance acknowledgement for attendance. Therefore, you can help by making sure that your child attends school on a regular basis and is on time. Please remember to schedule trips and vacations when school is not in session. As always, your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Belinda Henry



## *"Lunch with Heroes"*



Hunters Creek Elementary will commemorate the eighth anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup> by continuing our tradition of "Lunch with Heroes". We have invited police officers, fire fighters, and other public officials to have lunch with the students on Thursday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

Students are encouraged to wear red, white and blue or some type of patriotic clothing to show appreciation to the people dedicated to keeping our community safe.



## HUNTERS CREEK ELEMENTARY VOLUNTEERS 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR

As you know, before volunteering on any Spring Branch Independent School District campus, you are required to complete a volunteer registration form. This form must be approved by SBISD prior to any volunteer time on campus including attending your child's field trips. Your current volunteer status from the prior year will expire on September 30, 2009.

**Please type in the following link in order to register for the current year:**

**[http://www.springbranchisd.com/partners/part\\_dev/volunteers/volunteers.htm](http://www.springbranchisd.com/partners/part_dev/volunteers/volunteers.htm)**

Once you have registered, you will need to show your Driver's license to the school office which will allow you to be on campus as a volunteer and your hours will start to log in at that time. Please return to the office at the end of your volunteer time and check out.

If you have any questions, please contact Anna Reppert at **[anna.reppert@comcast.net](mailto:anna.reppert@comcast.net)**



## **PTA WEBSITE**

Thank you to Cheri Stewart, PTA website chair, for the many hours she spent designing and updating our PTA website this summer! Please visit our PTA website at: [www.hcepta.com](http://www.hcepta.com)

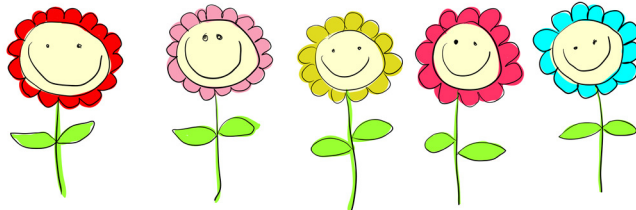
It contains:

- Forms
- Newsletters
- School Calendar & Event Descriptions
- PTA Committee Chairs
- PTA Executive Board
- Rebate Information
- Volunteer Registration
- Scouting Information

## **LIFE SKILL**

*Responsibility*

To respond when appropriate, to be accountable for your actions



A Huge Thanks to  
Vinceanne Mandola-Green  
&  
Pronto Cucinina  
for donating  
the delicious cookies  
for the PTA  
Back-to-School Luncheon!



## WELCOME BACK CUB SCOUTS

Are you considering the Cub Scouts for your child?

Then join us at . . . **RALLY NIGHT!**



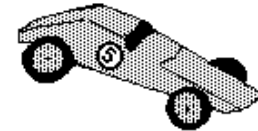
Hunters Creek Cub Scouts and families with 1st - 5th grade boys who are interested in joining the Cub Scouts are welcome to “run with the Pack” at **Rally Night** by the hardtop (or Cafeteria in case of rain) on **Thursday, September 3, 2009**, from 6:00pm to 7:00pm. We’ll eat James Coney Island hot dogs, have Pushmobile Races, and learn about the Cub Scout program for the next school year.

Scouting originally began when a British Army officer, stationed in India and Africa around the turn of the century, wrote a small handbook called *Aids to Scouting* to help his new recruits (who were too accustomed to city life) adapt to frontier life and learn resourcefulness, adaptability, and leadership qualities that the frontier required. After returning home, his program and little handbook were used to start a scouting organization designed for young boys that has now grown worldwide. The Cub Scout program at Hunters Creek Elementary School continues this tradition with activities that are fun for the kids, and at the same time, are intended to promote values of citizenship, compassion, cooperation, courage, faith, health and fitness, honesty, perseverance, positive attitude, resourcefulness, respect, and responsibility.



The Cub Scouts have “Pack” meetings for all grade levels once a month, and “Den” meetings for smaller groups twice a month. There are campouts in the fall and spring, and special events.

These special events include the Cake Auction, where Cub Scouts bake specially “kid-designed” cakes that are auctioned, the Pinewood Derby, where racecars are carved from small pinewood blocks and raced on an inclined track, and the Rain-Gutter Sail Boat Races, where little sailboats are built from kits and blown by huffing and puffing children through water filled rain-gutters.



Come join the fun. Call Cubmaster David Hotze, Home Phone: (713) 467-0375, email: [dnh@ceconet.com](mailto:dnh@ceconet.com), or Suzanne Harter, Pack Committee Chair, Home Phone: (713) 682-6401, email: [zanharter@aol.com](mailto:zanharter@aol.com) for more information.

OPEN HOUSE  
CHICKEN SPAGHETTI  
DINNER

October 1<sup>st</sup> 6pm-7:30

Deliciously Catered by:

Amy Cone and Dream Cuisine!!



Make your reservations today by filling out the form and returning in your child's folder.

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\$8.00 per person

Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Reservations \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ cash \_\_\_\_\_ check \_\_\_\_\_ check no. \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Hunters Creek PIA  
and memo towards PIA Open House Dinner

And as always, THANK YOU for your support of  
Hunters Creek Elementary!!

We couldn't do it without you!!!!!!!!!!!!



## Teacher Wish List

Dear HCE Families-

It's that time again, for us, as proud HCE families, to help support our Staff and Faculty by donating money and/or purchasing supplies or learning materials your teachers need. Each year, they request items to better their classroom in which our children benefit. They also depend on our donations to enjoy yearly field trips. Please consider this monetary commitment throughout the month of September in fulfilling their Wish List.

Another request, is that you are open minded in where you choose to purchase supplies and materials. The Specials Teachers are equally important and are in need of items. Please take the time to thoroughly look through the Teacher Wish List binder we will have available at each grade level coffee, to determine what you would like to purchase for our incredible staff.

We would like to extend the purchasing through the entire month of September so that we can order in the beginning of October. We are available in many ways to accept your money and completed forms.

You may go online to [springbranchisd.com](http://springbranchisd.com) and click on Hunters Creek. Go to the Homepage and click on PTA. You will see a link at the bottom that says Teacher Wish List. Download the Wish List and print the form to be completed in which you can turn in via your child's red folder, drop it off in the TWL box in the office, bring it to the coffee, or mail it to the address below.

There is a form in the Newsletter that you may use and send back in your child's red folder, in which the teacher will know where to turn in.

You may mail it to me direct:

Dawn Dixon  
942 Boros Drive  
Houston, Texas 77024

We will also be available in the front office of Hunters Creek September 21-25 from 11a.m. to 1 p.m., with the updated lists of what is left to purchase.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Very Sincerely,

Dawn Dixon  
713-927-7389

Gina Karathanos  
281-813-5937

# Teacher Wish List

Every teacher has submitted a list of items they would like to see in their classroom. These items include field trips and other learning materials to enhance your child's class or specialty areas. The list is available for your review in the office as well as during parent coffees in September.

You can choose specific items to donate to your child's class/specialist or you have the option of using this form to make a general contribution and sending the form and a check to the school. We will be collecting funds for specific items the week of September 21-25 in the front office from 11 am to 1pm.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's teacher/  
Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's grade: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ towards funding items on my teacher's wish list in order of her preference. She will designate which are the most important products to supplement her classroom.

I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ towards my child's field trips.

I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ towards the Teacher's Wish List. The principal will designate the use of these funds to the non-grade level items.

You will receive a tax receipt in you child's backpack within the next week.

\*If your teacher's wish list is already complete, your donation will be used to purchase the grade level team items. If grade level purchases are complete, your donation will go towards another area of Hunters Creek Elementary that is in need.

If you have any questions, please call Dawn Dixon 713-927-7389, or Gina Karathanos 281-813-5937



Mark your calendars with the following dates for Back To School Coffees. There is a separate Coffee for each grade level. This is the perfect way to meet new friends, catch up with old friends, and sign up to help in your child's classroom. All coffees take place right after the bell rings at school, from 8:15-9:45a.m.

Please plan to join us!

Tuesday, Sept 8th — 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Paige Weinstein

733 E. Creekside

Wednesday, Sept 9th — 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Helen Schmidt

711 Pifer

Thursday, Sept 10th — 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Renna Rauch

762 W. Creekside

Tuesday, Sept 15th — Kinder

Diana Knox

830 Country Lane

Wednesday, Sept 16th — 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

Laura Shelby

510 Saddlewood

Thursday, Sept 17th — 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

Kerry Stovall

10102 Memorial Dr

Thank you to these HCE Moms  
for having us in their homes!

## *HCE Policy Corner*

**Tardies** - The school bell rings at 8:00 a.m. Any child not in the classroom when the bell rings, is considered tardy. Please make sure your child arrives to school on time each day. Students who arrive to school on a late bus are permitted to enter class without being considered tardy.

**Absences** - For safety reasons, parents of students who are absent should phone the front office (713-251-6000) to report an absence by 9:00 a.m. A note or email is still required upon return stating the reason for the absence.

### *To Submit a Newsletter Article*

1. **Write** your article as a **Microsoft Word** document.
2. **E-mail** it to **all 5** newsletter editors at:



rdemoes@comcast.net  
althealee@comcast.net  
sassydesignsinc@comcast.net  
virginias@ireality.com  
witte@texas.net

3. You should then **receive a response** from the editor who is responsible for that week. **If you do not get a response, please call** one of us to make sure your article will be included! The **DEADLINE** for submitting articles is every **WEDNESDAY AT 10:00 AM**. Articles will be accepted **ONLY** by e-mail. If you have any questions, please call any one of us!

<b>Renata DeMoes</b>	<b>281-381-6545</b>
<b>Althea Lee</b>	<b>713-984-1615</b>
<b>Sandy Means</b>	<b>713-906-1289</b>
<b>Virginia Schwanauer</b>	<b>713-984-2490</b>
<b>Teresa Witte</b>	<b>713-647-8444</b>