

Bryker Woods PTA Newsletter

January 17, 2012

Monday 1/16	Tuesday 1/17	Wednesday 1/18	Thursday 1/19	Friday 1/20	Saturday 1/21
Martin Luther King Jr. Day— No School			Community Principal Profile Meeting, 6–7 p.m., Library		

Principal's Corner

Participating in the BW Science Fair (February 2) is a wonderful opportunity for Panthers to use critical thinking, reading, writing, math, technology, research and science process skills to explore their world and share their interests. Check out the science bulletin board in the main hallway, across from the cafeteria, and PTA website link for information. Many thanks to Science Fair Coordinators Ginger Boreing, Venus Santos, and Mandy De Mayo—"Go Science!"

The temperatures may be dropping, but the "Bike Fit Fridays" are still rolling! Many thanks to Betsy Christian (Judge's Hill), Will Clark (Heritage Neighborhood), Cord Dover (BW Neighborhood), John Eastman (Ridgelea Neighborhood), and Adriana Graf (Rosedale Neighborhood) for promoting safety on bike trains. Hope to share the road with Panthers soon!

Bryker Woods Forever,
Jane Kronke, Interim Principal

From the PTA President

Now that everyone is settling into their 2012 groove, I'd like to take a moment to tell you what's on my mind as PTA President as we enter this new year.

First and foremost is appreciating the very supportive and incredibly competent school staff, community of parents, board members, and myriad volunteers who have helped guide our efforts thus far. You have made my job so much easier. Thank you.

Next, I want to make sure we maintain the momentum we've established in the first half of this school year. Upcoming major efforts include Science Fair, Arts by Bryker Woods, and Spring Fling. Ongoing projects include Grocery Cards Sales, After School Programs, Teacher Treats, Biking and Walking to School initiatives,

the new school Yearbook, and so much more. There's so much to do, and we always need and appreciate your help.

Finally, I know people tend to burn out, especially after spring break, so I'll be working hard to make sure we have identified next year's crop of PTA leadership before then. If you're interested in learning more about the PTA, please drop me a line or attend one of our upcoming Board meetings. We're now forming a Nominating Committee (to identify a slate of officers for next year) and a Financial Review committee. Might one of those be of interest to you?

—Steve Wiese, PTA President

PTA Board Meeting Announcement

The next PTA Board meeting will be held on Monday, January 23, at noon at the school. An agenda will be distributed via the email listserve later this week. All members of the Bryker Woods community are welcome to join.

Holiday Thanks

The Bryker Woods Support Staff wishes to thank all our families for their generosity and thoughtfulness in supporting the holiday gift collection. The holiday gift we all received in December before our winter break was warmly appreciated and a wonderful “bonus” for being part of the best school in our town.

Special thanks also to Mandy DeMayo for all her many efforts in coordinating this holiday collection.

Many Thanks!

Cynthia Trotter	Linda Herrera
Denise Wolfe	Cliff Dukes
Ruth Hansen	Jean Zappone
Dee Susong	Melissa Tothero
Dawn Ramsy	Pat Odom
Debbie Hime	Alcia Sillero
Sue Flores	Leonor Martinez
Melody Long	Lynda Levis

Important Information for Fifth and Sixth Grade Students/Parents

Because Bryker Woods students “track” to O. Henry Middle School, Ms. Trotter, our school counselor, works closely with the counselors at O. Henry to help facilitate middle school transition activities. She will be meeting with the O. Henry counselors on Wednesday, January 25, to learn updated information about this year's transition requirements and timeline. O. Henry counselors will be at Bryker Woods on Wednesday, February 1, to direct choice sheets completion with our 5th and 6th graders planning to attend O. Henry in the 2012–2013 school year. These forms will be sent home for parental approval and will need to be returned to your child's teacher as soon as possible, preferably by February 6. They will be sent from Bryker Woods to O. Henry as a group after final processing with Ms. Trotter. Please do not hesitate to contact her with any questions you may

have about this process. Students planning to attend other AISD middle schools will be completing choice sheets for those campuses as these forms are received by Ms. Trotter.

On January 5, AISD's Office of Student Services mailed Diversity Choice letters to all of our families residing in the Bryker Woods attendance area with an enrolled 5th or 6th grade student. Note: Parents of transfer students did not receive this letter and do not have this diversity choice option. Please be sure to return this form to our office as soon as possible as this is of great assistance to our counselor and to the Office of Student Services in planning for the next school year.

Transfer students wishing to continue to track with our students to O. Henry Middle School next year will need to follow the transfer policy guidelines as outlined on AISD's website at <http://archive.austinisd.org/academics/parentsinfo/transfer/>. Important: The deadline for submitting a "priority" transfer request is 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 31. These forms may be picked up in our school office. It is highly recommended that this form be hand delivered to the Office of Student Services, rather than sent through the mail. Please Also Note: Magnet schools generally do not send out notice of acceptance until sometime in March. If your child wishes to go to O. Henry in the event that they are not accepted to a magnet program, you must have the transfer request in by the January 31 deadline to be given "priority status."

Lastly, many students are in the process of completing applications for magnet schools for next year. Please help your child stay within the required timeline for submission of these forms. If you will need our office staff to copy last year's TAKS scores for this application process, it would be most appreciated if they could be given a 24-hour notice. Ms. Trotter will be sending home any additional information regarding middle school transition requirements and timelines over the next few weeks. Please check with your child periodically for this information.

Gifted and Talented

Each semester AISD schools screen applicants for our Gifted and Talented (GT) Program. Nominations for this year's Spring Screening should be turned in no later than January 27, 2012. The GT Parent Checklist will need to be completed and signed before students can be included in the assessment process. A copy of this form can be picked up in the school office, or can be downloaded at http://archive.austinisd.org/academics/docs/gt_parent_checklist_elementary_fall_2011.pdf. The screening process involves data collection spanning at least a four to six-week time frame, which will begin after the nomination deadline. Decisions made by the GT Selection Committee will be reported to parents the week of March 26, with services for identified students beginning in mid-April. In considering this program placement, you are encouraged to discuss your child's special strengths and talents with his/her teacher. Please return nomination forms to your child's teacher upon completion.

Parents wanting to know more may wish to look at information posted on AISD's main website by the Office of Advanced Academic Services, under "GT Parent Corner" at the following link: <http://archive.austinisd.org/academics/curriculum/gt/parentcorner.phtml>. Also, as noted in the previous newsletter, the GT office is now regularly updating a blog with news from their office at <http://aisdaas.blogspot.com/>.

Also, please feel free to contact Ms. Trotter, Bryker Woods counselor and Campus GT Advocate, with any questions you may have regarding the GT program as well.

Synopsys Community Fund Grant

We are pleased to announce that Bryker Woods Elementary School has been awarded a grant of \$5,000 from the Synopsys Community Fund to purchase digital video and still cameras, microphones, and tripods to be used by the students of Bryker Woods Elementary School and their teachers. Silicon Valley Community Foundation and the Synopsys Community Fund support math and science education programs and value partnerships with educational institutions and nonprofit organizations that can blend gifts of money with Synopsys employee involvement.

At the encouragement of Bryker Woods parent Kevin Lucas, Bryker Woods Technology Coach Melissa Totho wrote a grant proposal seeking \$5,000 in support from the Synopsys Community Fund to purchase digital recording equipment and tools that will empower BW students to create digital presentations for a variety of content-area assignments, and will enable BW students to represent their research and findings in their annual Science Fair presentations beginning in the 2012–2013 school year.

State-of-the-Art Technology Tools to be purchased with the grant money will include:

- 10 Digital Still Cameras
- 8 Digital Video Cameras
- 8 Tripods
- 4 wireless microphones

In her grant proposal, Ms. Totho noted that Bryker Woods PTA already generously supports a 50 percent time Technology Coach, but lacked the extra funds needed to purchase the digital technology tools required to enable students to capture digital video, images and audio recordings for multimedia presentations. Ms. Totho requested a one-time contribution of \$5,000 from Synopsys that will enable BW librarian Donna Rinn to create and launch the “Synopsys Technology Tools Lending Library” to be utilized by all students and teachers at Bryker Woods Elementary School for years to come.

Bryker Woods Running Club

Happy New Year! The Bryker Woods Health and Wellness Committee is excited to offer the Bryker Woods Running Club by Young Guns. Young Guns was started in 2009 by Casis Elementary teacher Larry Chauvin to teach kids the love of running as well as proper form and technique in order to be life-long runners. Young Guns was voted best after-school activity by the 2011 Austin Chronicle Reader’s Poll.

In this fit and fun running group, participants will learn proper running form, running drills, increase running stamina, and will engage in fun games to improve fitness. The BW Running Club is open to K-6th grade and will meet on Wednesdays from 2:45 p.m.–3:45 p.m. at the track. Participants will use the track and Shoal Creek Running Trail. This spring, participants will work toward running in the Capitol 10,000 1-mile Junior Dillo on Saturday, March 24.

www.brykerwoodspta.org

Session 1 will run from January 25 to February 8, session 2 will run from February 29 to March 28, and session 3 will run from April 4 to April 25. The cost per 4-week session is \$60, or \$15 per class. To register for the BW Running Club, click on the following link <http://www.younggunsrun.com/bryker-woods-running-club.html>.

Bryker Woods All School Yearbook Cover Contest!

Get your creative juices flowing because it is time for the yearbook cover contest! The contest is open to all current Bryker Woods students. The contest starts today, and all entries are due by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, January 27. Ms. Flores, Bryker Woods's wonderful art teacher, will lead a panel of judges. The panel will choose the cover and four runners up. The runners up will be on the back of this year's edition. Look for information in your folder today. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Ms. Wallace, faculty yearbook sponsor. Good luck and have fun!

Family Dance Night

Kindergarten and 1st grade will host our annual Family Dance Night on January 31. More information to come. Starting Thursday January 19, Ms. Long and myself will be team-teaching for three rotations in a row. This means if your child has music, they will be coming to the gym. So please dress for success and wear those tennis shoes on PE and Music days. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Peace,
Lynda Levis

Austin Girls' Choir

Austin Girls' Choir placement auditions are being held weekends through February 5 for girls age 8–18. Come sing with one of America's top treble choirs! Girls learn to sing 3- and 4-part harmony, classical to contemporary. Some financial aid is available; we also offer 30 percent off tuition for groups of five or more from one school. We rehearse in central Austin. Please visit www.girlschoir.com to learn more about this educational nonprofit organization and our twenty-one terrific years of service to the Greater Austin community, or call 453-0884 for more information!

Newsletter

Please send calendar items, submissions, and suggestions to bwptanewsletter@gmail.com. —Julien Devereux,
Newsletter Editor