



Happy Holidays!

Dear Friends,

As the year 2007 comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your dedication to the 53,000 boys and girls of Plano ISD. If space allowed in this newsletter, I could publish 2007 reasons to thank you for your professionalism and commitment to educational excellence.

During the course of this year, our students, faculty, staff and PTAs have amassed hundreds of awards and recognitions at the local, state and national levels. Just as important are the daily achievements that you share with our students as you inspire them to pursue their dreams.

I'm especially grateful to our staff and community leaders who helped this fall as we embarked upon an important, five-year strategic planning effort. Your contributions will help ensure that our students, faculty, schools and community continue to benefit from meaningful programs that will take our district to even greater heights of excellence.

Please accept my sincerest gratitude to you and my wish for a happy holiday and an even happier new year.

Doug Otto
Superintendent of Schools

You're Invited...

Plano ISD Board
of Trustees
Town Hall Meeting
Monday, January 14
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Allan K. & Carolyn H.
Bird Education Center,
1300 19th Street, Plano

Topic: Student and Family
Services Initiative
Co-hosts: Plano ISD
Council of PTAs

Holiday Helping Hands

Plano ISD Students & Staff Assist Families in Need



Harrington Elementary Student Council officers and classmates celebrated the school's successful canned food drive. Pictured are (l-r) Morgan Devaney, class representative; Chris Nelson, president, Lauren Helm, treasurer; Laura Brazier, vice-president; Preeti Kumar, secretary; and Noah Kerner, class rep.

Hundreds of families in need will have a brighter holiday season, thanks to the generosity of Plano ISD students and staff. Our approximately **70 schools and 10 service facilities** collected nearly **100,000 canned food items** through Plano Santas to provide several hundred **North Texas families** with a holiday meal. The top three collecting schools were **Hunt Elementary** with 8,118 cans, **Robinson Middle School** (6,000 cans) and **Murphy Middle School** (5,334 cans).

In addition, hundreds of Plano ISD employees and students shopped, collected and delivered clothing and gifts for more than **89 local families, including 350 children**, through the Assistance Center of Collin County and other local charities.

Student groups, faculty and staff initiated several unique holiday giving traditions, benefiting local families in need. Following are highlights from a few of our schools. A complete list is published online at: www.pisd.edu.

❖ **Andrews Elementary** students and staff collected 2,813 cans of food, even incorporating them into their physical education weight lifting program, thanks to teachers Emily Bednarz and Mary Jo Landingham. The students also collected toys, treats and blankets for the Collin County Animal Shelter.

❖ **Bowman Middle School** participated for the fifth year in its "Help the Kids Fund" to sponsor several of the school's families with gifts. Local companies, community members and college volunteers supported the effort through monetary and other donations.

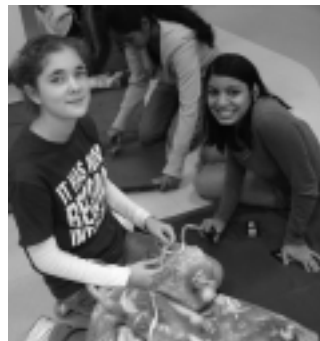
❖ **Carpenter Middle School** students are learning about global issues through participation in the O Ambassadors program, a joint project of Oprah's Angel Network and Free The Children. Funds raised by Carpenter students will be used towards holistic development projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

❖ **Frankford Middle School** Art Teacher Melissa Nerdin, students and teachers created hand made bowls to serve at a fundraising dinner. For their donation, dinner guests each received a bowl, and proceeds were given to the Texas Food Bank.

❖ **Plano West Senior High School** JROTC cadets organized the adoption of a family through Plano Santas, also collecting gifts from Jasper and Shepton high school cadets. At Thanksgiving, PWSH Student Congress joined PALs to provide dinner for a family in need.



Austin Perkins, Jasper High School STAND (Students Taking Action Not Drugs) member, prepared a sign for the club's hygiene and coat drive for Hope's Door women's shelter.



(Left) Vines High School National Honor Society members Hayley Bilbray and Nikhila Kanthety worked together to make blankets for the Linus Blanket Program in Plano.



(Right) Andrews kindergarten students Derrick Longoria and Chihiro Fukuda, with Teacher Tina Paine, helped gather donated toys and treats for the Collin County Animal Shelter.

The students also collected items for CITY House (Collin Intervention to Youth) runaway youth shelter, toys and books for Scottish Rite Children's Hospital, and organized a craft night for patients at the hospital. The group also wrote holiday greetings to soldiers overseas.

❖ **Shepard Elementary** came to the aide of one of its families whose house burned down last week. PTA leaders organized cash donations, clothing and a temporary apartment. In addition, Shepard Citizens of the Month, awarded by the Plano Rotary Club, prepared envelopes for the school's annual Giving Tree project.

❖ **Jasper High School** PALs adopted a family for the holidays. They also

visited Colonial Lodge, an assisted living and retirement community, to carol for residents, serve refreshments and play card games. Honors Biology students of teacher Peri Haynes and the Jasper JROTC also adopted families.

❖ **Shepton High School** Volleyball Team divided and conquered by shopping, wrapping and delivering gifts for a local family in need. The girls also provided a donated stove to the family. The Shepton JROTC also adopted a family.

❖ **Plano East Senior High School** Swim Team donated 1,200 canned goods. Spanish Club and Spanish classes donated \$700 through an annual "pass the can" drive to assist three families with a total of 13 children. FCCLA (Family, Community and Career Leaders of America) collected items for Hope's Door women's shelter.



FANS department staff prepared treats for residents of the CITY House youth shelter.

News & Kudos from Around the District



2007 Annual Report 'FUTURES by Plano ISD'

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto is proud to announce publication of Plano ISD's 2007 Annual Report. The report will be mailed this month to approximately 1,500 key communicators, including school principals, city and elected officials, chamber of commerce directors, college and other civic and educational leaders. The report focuses on Plano ISD's 2006-07 goals attainment and planning for the future, bond programs and financial statistics, and includes a "Class of 2007" profile, information about the Plano ISD Education Foundation's gifts to the district and several student and staff awards and recognitions earned during the 2006-07 school year. The title celebrates Plano ISD's vast resources available to prepare students (prek-12) for college and career success. Look for the report in school and district offices and on our Web site: www.pisd.edu.

Textbook Viewing by Public Available Through January 15

The community may review textbooks up for adoption on school days from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. through January 15 at the district administration building, 2700 W. 15th Street, third floor curriculum department. Textbooks up for adoption are also available for review at Region 10 Education Service Center, 400 East Spring Valley Road in Richardson. Textbooks for elementary math (K-5) in English and Spanish are up for adoption this year.

District Digest

E-mail: digest@pisd.edu

Phone: (469) 752-8030

Website:

www.pisd.edu/news

eNews listserv:

www.pisd.edu/eNews.htm



McCall Elementary School celebrated its Third Annual Multicultural Night on December 6. International activities included dancing, singing and martial arts demonstrations, celebrating 37 various cultures that are represented among McCall families. Pictured with families are Principal Cathy Taylor (third from left), YoTonja Benjamin, assistant principal (second from right) and Jun Melvin, district diversity director (right).

Council members are, from Plano East Senior High School: Nabeel Lockmanjee and David Paxman; Plano Senior High School: Xinyue (Lisa) Hu, Sibel Kayaalp and James MacGibbon; Plano West Senior High School: Susie Choi, Amanda Lu and Allyson Rice; and Jasper High School: Rena Sheng and Garrett Tollette.



Chloe Warden

State Playwright Winner ~ The play "Soon," written by Chloe Warden, Plano East Senior High School Theatre Major Studies student, has won the Texas Educational Theatre Association's (TETA) playwright competition for high school students. "Soon" will be performed by the Plano East Theatre, under the direction of Lisa Hale, at the TETA convention in Dallas in January. Chloe's play is based upon an annual event in which department store mannequins are brought to life.

Living Legends ~ Collin County Community College honored two of Plano ISD's former employees: Mary Alice Skaggs, namesake of Skaggs Elementary School, and Nancy Boyd, former director of guidance and counseling, as "2007 Living Legends" at a recent tribute dinner. Ms. Skaggs, the first Plano ISD teacher to earn a master's degree, taught English, journalism and economics for more than three decades. She was a 50-year sponsor of the Thursday Study Club. Ms. Boyd, a longtime teacher and counselor, founded the CITY House teen shelter. She is an advisor to My Friend's House, a children's shelter, and a board member of the Hendrick Academy of Honor.

Notable Notes...



Linda Arbolino

□ **Linda Arbolino**, Hedcoxe Elementary School music specialist and east cluster music team leader, has been invited to be a clinician at the Texas Choral Directors Association Convention to be held in San Antonio next summer. She will present a session on "Music Listening Strategies," which will focus on the process used for creative, active music listeners. Folk song, game materials, vocal improvisation and compositional techniques will be used to lead to greater understanding of masterworks.

□ **Lisa Thibodeaux**, English/journalism coordinator; **Libby DeLeon**, ESL coordinator; and **Marsha Cawthon**, Plano Senior High School Honors English IV and World of Ideas instructor, presented "Mapping Diverse Literacies for the Twenty-First Century" at the National Council of Teachers of English conference held recently in New York City. The trio presented tips on training and curriculum development, research about the writing process and English language learners, and developing a sense of community in the writing workshop classroom.

□ **Alisa Meli**, Schell Elementary School art specialist, was sworn in as Youth Art Month vice-president elect at the Texas Art Education Association conference held in November. **Janice Truitt**, art coordinator, was sworn in as Supervision Division Elect at the same conference.

□ **Bill Gilkison**, Plano ISD TV Studio producer, captured a Gold Award for his videotape "30 Years of Learning - the Holifield Science Learning Center 30th Anniversary" from the Ava Awards sponsored by the Association of Marketing and Communications Professionals. His video was among 14 percent of 1,700 entries to earn Gold Awards. TV Studio production assistant **Yasmine "Yassi" Range** became a United States citizen last month. She was presented with official documents and congratulated by staff at Plano City Hall.

Congratulations to these parents and grandparents:

□ **Jennifer Bonfessuto**, Andrews Elementary ESL teacher, and her husband **Dave** welcomed son **Nico** on November 13; **Donie Bishop**, deaf education interpreter, and her husband **Don** are excited to announce the birth of grandson **Dallas**, born on November 6 to proud parents **Jana and Clint Bishop**; and **Helen Jones**, Hightower Elementary FANS manager, became the proud grandmother of **Alexis Jayden** on December 18.



Sympathy is extended to the following employees:

□ **Judy Storholt**, Schimelpfenig Middle School administrative intern, whose mother **Mrs. Karlak** died in October; **Claire Jones**, Dooley Elementary School FANS manager, and her family on the December 13 death of her son **Eric Andrew Jones**; and to **Sandra Youngblood**, assessment and accountability department, and **Brian Fitzgerald**, Plano West math teacher and assistant volleyball coach, whose father-in-law and grandfather-in-law, respectively, **William Marvin Youngblood** died on December 14.

Thought for the Week:

"If you count all your assets, you always show a profit."

-Robert Quillen

NCTE Writing Awards ~ Three Plano Senior High School students are among 600 of their peers in the U.S., D.C, Virgin Islands, Canada and American Schools Abroad to earn 2007 Achievement Awards in Writing from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). Entries by John Eckerd, Jon Forisha and Michael Tseggay were chosen as award winners from among nearly 2,000 submitted works.

Congressional Youth Advisory Council ~ Ten Plano ISD high school students have been selected by U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson to participate in the 2007-08 Congressional Youth Advisory Council. They are among 42 students who make up the elite group who represent their peers as "Young Ambassadors to Congress."



Silvia Mendoza and Stephanie Lopez (l-r), Bowman Middle School sixth grade students, were among 127 participants in a December 8 KEYSS (Keeping Education Your Stepping Stone) Fall Conference sponsored by Plano ISD Student and Family Services and Collin County Community College. Through a partnership with Destination College, students and their parents received valuable information and tips for college preparation and adult literacy.