

# HUFFMAN HERALD

The PTA Newsletter



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## Message from the President, Cara Mendelsohn

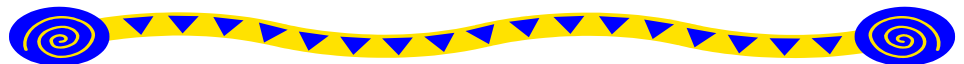
Happy, UMM... December!

I love this time of year. To me, it's about sharing, joy, love, cold weather and good food! For PTA, the programs begin to slow down a bit so we can all prepare and share some special times with our families. As parents, we need to remember to slow down and enjoy our kids – they really are growing up quickly. Take an afternoon to play Monopoly or Yahtzee together. Check out the new exhibit at the Science Place. Read together. These are precious days.

At Huffman, holiday celebrations in late November and December vary by family, custom and faith. And there are so many holidays to celebrate. One of the things I love best about our school is our strength of diversity AND success! Here are some of the holidays that families in the Huffman community will be celebrating:

- ◆ Thanksgiving – American
- ◆ Feast of the Immaculate Conception – Roman Catholic
- ◆ Christmas – Christian
- ◆ Hanukkah - Jewish
- ◆ Eid al Adha - Islam
- ◆ Day of the Covenant – Baha'i
- ◆ Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha – Baha'i
- ◆ Guru Nanak Birthday – Hindu
- ◆ Bodhi Day – Buddhist
- ◆ Kwanzaa – African American

So, my friends, please enjoy your holiday, whichever ones you celebrate, and may we all be blessed with peace and health.



## We were visited by the Prize Patrol!

The PISD Foundation visited Huffman on November 7<sup>th</sup> to award grants to three of our outstanding teachers:

**ABC Bags: Letter Sounds Are All you Need to Read! - Andra Harris, Kindergarten Team Leader, \$500.00** - This project consists of classroom and take-home alphabet activity bags. The contents of the bags will include plastic upper and lower case letters, letter formation cards for practicing handwriting, alphabet cards, and letter/picture cards. Also included will be cards listing activities to be used with the supplies in each bag.

**Fidget Fix-It - Jane Oestreich, Hoda Abdel-Ghani, \$1,333.87** - Fidget Fix-Its are designed to enhance learning opportunities for those students who have difficulty sitting still. Each grade level is supplied with a kit of items that gives these students suitable replacement behaviors and help them pay attention to the teacher. Fidget Fix-Its offer a variety of alternatives to help combat the wiggles and fidgets of children while enriching learning opportunities in the classroom.

**Congratulations to Ms. Harris, Ms. Oestreich and Ms. Abdel-Ghani!!!**

## HUFFMAN'S GOLD KEY BUSINESS PARTNERS – THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



Kaleidoscope  
Dinner My Way  
Tutoring Club  
Planet Burrito  
Knowledge Points  
Avon-KT Handley  
Snip Its

Arbonne-Amy Mitchell  
Huntington Learning Center  
First Choice Emergency Room  
Willow Bend Chiropractic  
Dr. Stephen Rayburn, D.D.S  
Sigma Tutors  
Doug & Jeanne Wieser

The Viking Craftsman  
American Standard  
Huffman Girl Scouts  
Charo Chicken  
Adventure Kids  
AXA Advisors-Abe Mansour  
Cub Scout Pack #265

Motophoto  
Wal-Mart  
Maximedia Recording Studios  
Sport Clips  
Pump It Up!  
Burris and Associates/Certainteed  
Allegra Print & Imaging

## RED RIBBON WEEK “RAP-UP”

By Emily Greenfield, Chairperson  
for Youth Protection

**McGruff**, the Crime Dog visited grades K-2 while Officer Jerrick Younger from the Plano Police Department held a fun and memorable assembly educating the kids on when and how to approach a McGruff safe house.

**“Do you know what to do?” Officer Younger asked at the end of his presentation.**

**The students rapped their reply, “Yeah, we know what to do. Yeah, yeah, we know what to do!”**

Officer Younger taught the kids to look for the McGruff sign whenever they are lost, hurt or scared.



Everyone, teachers and students alike, remembered that it's cool to say “NO!” to drugs when they wore their coolest hats and sunglasses.



The kids united together in a sea of red to stand up against drugs.



Officers from the Plano Police Department helped serve lunch to all the students, reinforcing that police are their friends.



A special thanks to all the Huffman teachers and staff for working together to keep our kids safe and drug free.

## Spirit Night – Thank You!

By Margie Pisterzi, VP – Fundraising

The November Spirit Night was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> at **Pump It Up – North Dallas**. We want to thank Pump It Up for their hospitality and their generous donation from the evening's proceeds.

First Grade Teachers (Nancy Matthews, Deanna Murray, Kathryn Pickles, Jennifer Ackels, and Caroline Presley) were our featured guests for the evening. We want to thank everyone for attending this event and making it a success!



We look forward to seeing everyone at the **Dec. 7 Spirit Night** at **Chick-Fil-A**, at the Park and Preston locale, **6-8PM**. See you there!



## Earth Science Month is Out of this World!

By Brigitte Petersen, Environmental Chairperson

Wow, what a turn out for the **Science Fair** kick-off. Marci Watson inspired us all to get started on a project! The kids were anxious to collect their poster boards and begin exploring the scientific process. We are looking forward to seeing all these projects, which are due on **January 15<sup>th</sup>**.

The **H.E.L.P. Club** (Huffman Environmental Leaders Program) learned all about recycling and did a wonderful job making posters. Walk around our halls and check these posters out. They remind us all to **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle** and protect our Environment! The next **H.E.L.P. club** meeting is **January 22<sup>nd</sup>** where the members will learn how to compost.

Congratulations to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class! They are the winners of the **Litter Free Lunch** conducted on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Each child was awarded with a biodegradable Jiffy pot, Peat Pellet and seedlings to plant. Have fun watching your flowers grow next spring!

Did everyone get a chance to play with the compost and live worms at the Earth Science stations in the school entry November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>? Thank you to the City of Plano Environmental Education Department for coming out to lead this program.

Remember your **Environmental Awareness Contest** entries are due December 8<sup>th</sup>. If you still need an application just pick one up at the Recycling table at the entrance to the school or download the form on [www.huffmanpta.org/envcontest.html](http://www.huffmanpta.org/envcontest.html).



We still need a few more volunteers to help out at lunch the week after Thanksgiving as we start organic recycling in the cafeteria. If you can help, please contact Brigitte Petersen at 214-647-1156 or [environment@huffmanpta.org](mailto:environment@huffmanpta.org).



## Citizenship Week was Awesome!

Recently, Huffman PTA sponsored our first-ever **Citizenship Week**. The halls were decked out with red, white, and blue, and the Statue of Liberty was even on display!

Throughout the week, Huffman students wore red, white, and blue shirts, and spiritwear to show their Huffman citizenship. On the morning announcements, patriotic music played and citizenship lessons were taught.



In the classrooms and prior to school starting, our students learned about voter registration, then voted in a mock election for governor (and voted for Perry with the same 40% as in the real election). They met and asked questions of Jean Callison, Plano City Council member, and wrote letters to - and drew pictures for - our active duty troops.

The week ended on a high note with our community **Veterans' Day program** which included the Plano West Color Guard and a wonderful presentation by our fourth grade students (*photo above*). Many parents, grand-parents and business partners joined us to honor the veterans from the Huffman community and beyond.



What a thrill to meet one of our special guests, Colonel Hivner, a Vietnam POW for over seven years, who shared his remarkable story with us.

Thank you to our Citizenship Week Chairman, **Christi Swanner**, for this great week!



## Volunteers of the Month November 2006

By Traci Koen, VP –  
Volunteers

### K.T. Handley

If you are reading this right now, you can thank K.T.! She has brought our newsletter to a whole new level this year! K.T. works very hard on a continual basis to ensure that our Huffman PTA newsletter is informative, easy to read, and includes everything a Huffman parent needs to know. Many parents have commented that they are informed and educated about all that is going on at Huffman day to day, and K.T. plays a big role in that. The newsletter is K.T.'s official PTA position. However, she also volunteers for the school on a regular basis for various functions and projects. If you have something to be included in the newsletter, please email [newsletter@huffmanpta.org](mailto:newsletter@huffmanpta.org). Thank you, K.T.!

### Jaime Kin

Jaime is currently serving as our PTA's Sally Foster chairperson and just recently completed the Sally Foster fundraiser and cookie dough sales. Thanks to Jaime, we will all have the most beautifully wrapped gifts for birthday parties and the holidays, not to mention wonderful homemade cookies ready to bake at any time! Jaime gave this fundraiser her all, and it was a big success. Jaime also volunteered to participate on the recent bylaws committee and was instrumental in helping our PTA update our current bylaws. She further participated as part of the audit committee to audit our PTA financial records. Thank you, Jaime!

### Danny Kin

Danny, along with his wife, Jaime, own Charo Chicken and have supported the Huffman PTA in many ways. Danny committed to being a business/community partner with our Huffman PTA and provided our families with dinner during Huffman's Literacy night for only \$1 per person. He also hosted one of our recent spirit nights, and donated a percentage of sales to the Huffman PTA. Thank you, Danny for being a supportive Huffman parent and community partner!

*To nominate a volunteer for an upcoming volunteer of the month, please send your nomination to [volunteers@huffmanpta.org](mailto:volunteers@huffmanpta.org).*

*The Holiday season is upon us, which means that all of the grade levels will be having holiday/winter parties soon. Please make sure you have completed the background check and notary form required by PISD, so that you can plan to volunteer for the upcoming festivities. If you have not done so, go to [www.huffmanpta.org](http://www.huffmanpta.org) and click on the volunteer link.*



## Email Reminders!

PayPAMS is the school district's electronic payment system for meals, fare busing and athletic fees.

PayPAMS features include:

- a low balance email notification when balances fall below \$10.00
- the ability for parents to monitor what children eat on a daily basis

For a full list of PayPAMS features visit [www.pisd.edu](http://www.pisd.edu) and click on PayPAMS

## Laptops to Lend

Plano ISD offers a unique program to help increase academic achievement by providing a laptop to students. This program is completely free to all eligible students.

This program provides a laptop, power supply, 6 pieces of software (primary language and math programs), a CD drive, and a case to students.

- Students can sign these laptops out through the library for 30 days
- Laptop must be brought back and Mrs. Oglesby will check it over
- Laptop can then be signed out again
- Laptop cannot connect to the Internet
- Laptop has Office 2003 installed
- Student/parent may load software
- Only has a CD drive – no floppy drive
- Students may use a flash drive to save and bring files to school



Nora Oglesby, our Campus Technology Administrator, manages the **Laptop** and **PC** availability programs for Huffman, as well as maintaining the school's website.

Visit it at

[k-12.pisd.edu/Schools/Huffman/index.htm](http://k-12.pisd.edu/Schools/Huffman/index.htm)

## Specials at Huffman:

### Art needs your throw-aways!

Junk art is fun! Save those tubes from wrapping paper or paper towels. We also need small boxes like Mac & Cheese or cereals boxes...lots of junk like old jewelry...old crayons especially if they don't have the paper. Never throw away an old toothbrush; sanitize it and send it in. Bring it all in by the first of next year.



Contact Beejae Hawkins, Huffman Art Specialist at 469-752-1954 or email her at [bhawkin@pisd.edu](mailto:bhawkin@pisd.edu).

## Howdy Huffman Hawks!

### From Huffman PE Coaches

We just finished recording our Fifth graders results for the Fitness Gram this past week, and we are excited to see how fit our students are with push-ups, sit-ups and flexibility. All grade levels have shown an incredible degree of improvement in their speed and endurance from daily conditioning and exercises. All coaches like knowing that Huffman students are strong and healthy and we encourage our students to drink more water and pass on the soda pop.

We will be starting a Basketball unit for the upper grade levels. For our younger students, brace yourself for Bombs & Missiles with a touch of Burn Ball.

Congratulations again to students that have received PE awards. We would hope all students would model after those students and strive to receive your own award for good citizenship and effort during PE.

Quotes from coaches:

**Ford:** "You only live once-so live it up right now"

**Dailey:** "Let's all be the hammer not the nail"

**Lara:** "Let's go out and shoot for the moon and even if we miss we will fall amongst the stars"

Share the love, Huffman Hawks!



Huffman PE teachers: John Lara, Shavonne Ford, and Team Leader, Jim Dailey



### **Wanted: Weekly Volunteer Help in the Library**

We need people who will commit to weekly slots helping children check out, and shelving returned books.

#### **Times available...**

Monday morning 9:15 - 11:30

Thursday morning 10:15 - 12:30

Please contact **Sandee Black** at 972-931-3353 or [library@huffmanpta.org](mailto:library@huffmanpta.org)

### **Gear into Action at Huffman's FIRST ANNUAL BIKE RODEO**



**Hey, kids!** Grab your bike and helmet and join the Plano Police Department, the Richardson Bike Mart and the Cub Scouts at Huffman's first annual Bike Rodeo! The Bike Rodeo will feature a bike check, an obstacle course, bike races and safety tips. And did we mention? ... GREAT PRIZES!!!

Our goal is to educate all Huffman students about bicycle safety in a fun, memorable way. We encourage all parents and children to attend and bring along your family, friends and neighbors. We will need parents to help during the event. Please call Emily Greenfield at (972) 380-8267 if you are able to attend and willing to lend a hand. Mark your calendars:

When? **Saturday, January 20, 2007  
9AM to 12 NOON**

Where? **Huffman Elementary parking lot**



On Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, Huffman students will get the opportunity to attend Science in the Movies, a program paid for by the PTA. This show consists of demonstrations of special effects and an explanation of the science that makes them possible. Key science topics include chemical energy, electric circuits, pyrotechnics, simple machines and the states, changes and properties of matter. For more information, visit [www.scienceinthemovies.com](http://www.scienceinthemovies.com).



### **Huffman Science Fair is Coming!**

Marci Watson, Teacher Liaison for Huffman's Science Fair reminds us that science projects are required from students in Third, Fourth and Fifth grades and recommended for those in Kindergarten, First and Second grades.

Entry forms for submitting science projects may be found at the school website, <http://k-12.pisd.edu/Schools/Huffman/HuffmanHappenings/huffmanhappeningsindex.htm>.

Projects are due Wednesday, January 17, and the Science Fair is Friday, January 19, 2007.

To contact Marci Watson, email her at [Marci.Watson@pisd.edu](mailto:Marci.Watson@pisd.edu).

### **Collin County Legislative Day**



Nearly 300 Collin County residents will travel to Austin February 19-20<sup>th</sup> of 2007 to speak with state legislators regarding issues such as transportation, education and clean air. "**Collin County Legislative Day**" is a two day event in which business, civic, education, city and county leaders congregate at the state capitol. Legislative agendas will be forthcoming from organizations such as PTA. If you are interested in advocating for these points and other issues affecting our county, please email [info@huffmanpta.org](mailto:info@huffmanpta.org)

## Upcoming Events

- Wed., 12/6 – Science in the Movies  
Assembly
- Thurs., 12/7 – Spirit Night at Chick-Fil-A  
6-8PM, Park and Preston location
- Thurs., 12/14 – Huffman Honor Choir  
Winter Concert
- Thurs., 12/21 – Noon release for  
Students
- Fri., 12/22 – Wed., 1/3 – Winter Break –  
No School for PISD Students
- Thurs., 1/4 – PISD Students return  
to class
- Thurs., 1/11 – B-Fun Night  
Family Bingo and K-4 Spelling Bee
- Mon., 1/15 – Student/Teacher Holiday  
M.L. King Birthday observed
- Wed., 1/17 – Science projects due for  
Huffman Third, Fourth and Fifth  
Graders
- Fri., 1/19 – Huffman Science Fair
- Sat., 1/20 – Bike Rodeo
- Mon., 1/22 – PTA Board Meeting and  
Practical Parenting presentation  
9AM

## PTA QUICK LINKS

Plano Council PTA <a href="http://www.planopta.org/">http://www.planopta.org/</a>	Area 15 PTA <a href="http://www.area15.txpta.net/">http://www.area15.txpta.net/</a>
Texas PTA <a href="http://www.txpta.org/">http://www.txpta.org/</a>	National PTA <a href="http://www.pta.org/">http://www.pta.org/</a>



## CALLING ALL 5th GRADE PARENTS!

*It seems like yesterday they were oh, so small.  
Look at them today, they have grown so tall.*

Fifth grade parents -- this is your chance to create yearbook memories by sending in your 5th graders' baby pictures for the 2006-2007 Huffman yearbook.

Just write your child's name and homeroom teacher's name on the back of a photo and send it to school with your child. There will be a drop box in the 5th grade area for the kids to place them. And, don't worry; all pictures will be returned!

Any questions, call Linda Hunn 972-250-4371.



## Spiritwear Sidewalk Sale!

Friday, December 15, 2:45-3:45, in front of the office a wide selection of Huffman T-shirts, sweatshirts, and a few bargain items will be available for your holiday gift-giving needs! Various adult & kid sizes; come early for best selection. Cash or checks--see you then. Questions? Email [spiritwear@huffmanpta.org](mailto:spiritwear@huffmanpta.org).

**Directory Correction - Tutoring Club - W.Plano is at the SW corner of W. Parker and Parkwood Blvd.**

Be sure to visit our own Huffman PTA website for the electronic version of all the news, newsletter archives, and BLOGs, too! A recent addition is the *Helpful Links for Huffman Parents*. Keep Current with all the latest news at [www.huffmanpta.org](http://www.huffmanpta.org)

National PTA has a free resource/ newsletter called The PTA Parent. Sign up and receive it via email at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org).