

January 2013  
Volume 3, Issue 2

# TUSCANY HEIGHTS GROWLIN' GOOD NEWS

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## MINUTES from MINDY

As we prepare for a new year and new beginnings, it is so rewarding to reflect on how many great events and programs our Tuscany Tigers experienced the last few months of 2012.

October was a busy month at Tuscany, and we thank our supportive families for making our Apex Tech Trek a huge success. Our school raised over \$30,000 to purchase microphone systems for all of our remaining classrooms. Also, our Tigers learned to make good choices and to *Be the Best Me* during Red Ribbon Week. In honor of our healthy tigers, PTA designed and purchased the new "Tusky the Tiger" chain link fence art. We also had another fun and patriotic Field Day in November to celebrate Veteran's Day.

While your PTA planned many healthy and active events, we also focused on the arts through our student directory contest, the PTA Reflections program, and a visit from the amazing and talented Houston Opera.

As we look toward the new year and a new semester, your PTA is busy organizing and preparing for our *3rd Annual Run for the Heights*. This is such a wonderful family event that includes a fun run, 5K, health fair, and fitness demonstrations. Come join the fun and start training to walk or run on Saturday, February 23, 2013! All proceeds from this fundraiser directly benefit our school and students.

It's a new year, so if you have not connected with your THE PTA, start now! Our website continues to be a wealth of information to keep you connected to Tuscany Heights and all of its happenings.

Here's to a healthy, safe, and educational 2013! Go Tigers Go!

Mindy Waters  
THE PTA President



## Lost and Found

THE PTA website will now host pictures of items in the Lost and Found. Visit <http://www.tuscanyheightspta.org/lost-and-found.html> to view items lost by students. To claim an item please have your child visit the Lost and Found area on the right side of the stage in the cafeteria, or you may e-mail [harrisdreamteam@gmail.com](mailto:harrisdreamteam@gmail.com). For e-mails please include a description of the item (size, color, brand) along with your child's name, grade level, and teacher's name. Thanks for helping these items find their way home. If you are interested in volunteering for this cause please e-mail [harrisdreamteam@gmail.com](mailto:harrisdreamteam@gmail.com).

*Unclaimed items will be donated to our Sister School throughout the year.*



## Calling T.H.E. D.O.G.S Dads Of Great Students

A Tuscany Heights Watch DOGS dad recently stated: *"I did not realize what an impact fathers could have on the school grounds. The look on my daughter's face and her discussion when she came home from school was a true blessing. I hope more fathers sign up because the kids really appreciate us being there."*

Dads, uncles, granddads, step-dads—Tuscany Heights needs you to continue making an impact this Spring semester!

Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) is an innovative program launched at Tuscany Heights this year which has enabled fathers and father-figures to be a positive male role model and to provide an extra set of eyes and ears--and the results have been astounding.

If you have not been a Watch DOG yet, now is the time to sign up! If you have already served as a Watch DOG this year, please consider returning for another day!

Simply contact the Watch D.O.G.S. coordinators at [watchdogs@tuscanyheightspta.org](mailto:watchdogs@tuscanyheightspta.org) and request information on how to sign up for your day of service. You will be able to view a presentation about the program, ask questions, order your official Watch D.O.G.S. t-shirt, then allow you to register and pick your day to be the "Hero of the Hallway." Please note that for the safety of our children and staff, you must complete the NEISD Criminal Background Check (a.k.a. "DPS Clearance") in order to volunteer.

Your PTA Watch DOGS coordinators, Doug and Suzanne Opersteny, are ready to serve! They may be contacted at [watchdogs@tuscanyheightspta.org](mailto:watchdogs@tuscanyheightspta.org), or call them at [\(210\) 381-2632](tel:2103812632).

## APEX TECH TREK FUNDRAISER

Thank you to all of our students and families for participating in the 2012 Tuscany Heights Tech Trek and for raising \$31,269.73!!! In addition to raising money for technology, our students learned many leadership lessons, improved their fitness and had fun. Using the money collected during this fundraiser and a portion of THE PTA campus improvements funds, we purchased 31 Lightspeed amplification systems for the remaining 26 regular education classrooms, the ALE room, the GT room, both music rooms, the art room and the computer lab. These amplification systems were previously installed in the fourth and fifth grade classrooms using PTA funds and have received rave reviews from the teachers and students who use them.





## ***1st 9 Weeks Award Assembly***



**At the end of each 9 week grading period, Tuscany Heights recognizes the efforts of our students and staff.**

On November 2, THE celebrated the end of the 1st weeks with the theme of Grades and the Covey Trait - Begin with the End in Mind. Guest presenters included San Antonio Talons football player Dan Brenner and the Reagan HS Dancers!! Our student speakers were Emily Kiolbassa (Schlosser) who spoke about the importance of grades and Tessa Devine (Drake) who conveyed her thoughts about Beginning with the End in Mind. Way to go Tigers!!!!

*Thank you to our guest presenters. Tuscany Heights appreciates your support of our students and staff!!*

San Antonio Talons Football Player (Contact: Dan Brenner 210-255-8991  
or [d.brenner@sanantoniotalons.com](mailto:d.brenner@sanantoniotalons.com))

Reagan Dancers (Contact: Kellie Kiolbassa [kekiol@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kekiol@sbcglobal.net))





# RED RIBBON WEEK

## "Be the Best Me"

The aim of Red Ribbon week, held Oct 22-26, was to help educate students of the benefits of healthy lifestyles and making the best choices. Tuscany Heights celebrated this week by participating in various activities each day. Thank you to everyone who made this week a success and so much fun for our campus!!!

**Monday - Red Ribbon Week Launch - Wear Red**  
*Reagan High School Winner's Circle morning greetings.*

**Tuesday - Team Up to Be the Best - Wear favorite team jersey or team colors**  
*Bring uniforms for our sister school all week.*

**Wednesday – Be Your Silly Self - Wear crazy socks, tie, hats, etc.**  
*Anti-bullying Magician John O'Bryant performs "Friends Not Foes Magic Show".*

**Thursday - Turn Your Back on Bullies**  
*Wear shirt backwards or inside out*

**Friday - Show Tuscany Pride -- Wear Tuscany Shirts**  
*Tusky will award students who are "Being the Best Me" with spirit sticks.*





# Read Around the School / Story Book Character Parade

Tuscany Heights hosted its first school-wide Story Book Character Parade on Wednesday, November 7 to kick off Read Around The School. Students, teachers, and staff were encouraged to arrive at school dressed up as their favorite story book characters. Parents were able to view the parade from the front of the school and cheer on our parading book characters walking down the front sidewalk of the school. All of our Tigers really got into the spirit with great characters!!





## THE PTA Presents...FIELD DAY!!!

On November 9th, Tuscan Heights students enjoyed another great Field Day thanks to our awesome PE teachers, Mrs. Fields and Mrs. Burges, a few community sponsors and a bunch of parent volunteers! In honor of Veteran's Day, our students celebrated with touches of red, white and blue, patriotic music and loads of activities. With so many fun things to do, it was hard to choose a favorite. However, the line for the inflatable bounce house and obstacle course were the longest. Thank you to the THE PTA for sponsoring those activities.

Our students were also treated to golf, tennis, bowling, Birdie Ball, guessing games, gymnastics, tug of war, limbo and a bean bag toss. It was so great to see all of our students participating in these physical activities with their friends and classmates while building strong, healthy bodies and having a ball doing it. Thanks again to all of our parent volunteers for helping to make this day so successful.



## THE Directory Art Contest



When the call went out to all artists to submit drawings describing "Tuscany Heights, Great happens here" for the school directory, the artists listened and delivered!

Tuscany Heights students submitted impressive works depicting how they are great leaders or what great things happen at our school.

Katelyn Padalecki, in Mrs. Davis's 5th grade class, won the Cover Art Award with her colorful picture featuring kids with Tusky donating shoes to our Sister School. Katelyn has a bright future in the art world as do the talented artists who won for their grade levels.

**Congratulations, Tuscany Heights Directory Art Contest Winners!**

### Grade Level Directory Art Contest Winners

Cover: Katelyn Padalecki (Davis)

Kinder: Makayla Shirley (Young)

1st Grade: Emma Padalecki  
(Lunsford)

2nd Grade: Ellie Waters (Pantuso)

3rd Grade: Jackson Kibby (Balcar)

4th Grade: Camilla Guel (Potter)

5th Grade: Calvin Lu (Schlosser)

### *THE Reflections Art Contest 2012-2013*

Arts In Education  
2012-2013 Reflections Theme

The  
Magic  
of a  
Moment

Reflections is a National PTA Arts in Education Award program. Every year has a new theme and students are given the chance to submit entries related to the theme in 1 of 6 categories: dance choreography, film production, literature, musical composition, photography, and visual arts. All entries are recognized and awarded. Advancing entries can be judged at the district, state and national levels. For 2012-2013, the theme was "The Magic of a Moment."

Tuscany students create wonderful entries to really showcase their creative side. If you missed out this year, don't worry...the theme for 2013-2014 is "Believe, Dream, Inspire." The entry deadline will be in October. For more information on THE PTA Arts in Education, please contact [artsined@tuscanyheightspta.org](mailto:artsined@tuscanyheightspta.org).

## ***Eat For a Cause: Papa John's***

*Tuscany Heights partnered up with Papa John's to raise \$1800 benefiting our Tigers!!! Over 40 THE staff, teachers, and parent volunteers helped deliver pizza to our Tiger families on November 15. All proceeds went to the school in honor of their hard work that night. Thank you everyone who supports our Eat For a Cause events and helps us continue to provide fun and educational activities for our Tigers!!*

## ***THE PTA Presents...Houston Opera To Go***

*Students at Tuscany Heights enjoyed a real treat in December. THE PTA Presents Brought Houston Grand Opera's Opera To Go program for a performance of Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel. The singers told the familiar fairy tale through singing and puppetry. The voices were beautiful, and the presentation was flawless. I was so proud of our students' attentiveness and good audience behavior. The performers did not use microphones, and yet you could hear every word! The students were particularly interested in the set and costumes which were all made specifically for the show by designers within the opera company. At the end of the show, students got to meet the performers and ask questions. They learned about how the performers train and prepare for a show, how things work backstage, how many times they perform each show, and many other interesting things about the opera. The performers were very thorough, and gave an informative, interactive answer to each question. Overall, this assembly was top notch. Thank you to all of the performers and volunteers who made this a great experience for the students!!*





## ***THE FANTASTIC FIFTH***

### ***GRADE SPOTLIGHT***

**5th Grade Staff: (from left to right)  
Mrs. Morrow, Mrs. Grams, Mrs.  
Johle, Mrs. Blackler, Mrs. Davis, Ms.  
Cue, and Mrs. Schlosser**



## What's Happening in Fifth Grade

December has been a busy month for Fifth Graders at Tuscany Heights.

In Language Arts, the focus has been on learning about words that have multiple meanings, and searching out word meanings using only context clues. Many students have been busy studying the official spelling word list in preparation for the Spelling Bees. Fifth grade book clubs and novel units have also sprung up recently. Students are reading novels about young people living in a place and time that is very mysterious compared to anything we know to be reality. Others are learning about lions, witches, and wardrobes, penguins, a war with grandpa, or how to eat deep fried bugs!!

Math classes have just finished learning almost everything there is to know about fractions and are kicking off a geometry unit by creating tessellations and identifying isosceles, scalene, and equilateral triangles.

Fifth grade scientists have just learned to differentiate between weather and climate and are beginning to study the water cycle. On science day, every fifth grader rotated through three labs, making tornadoes in jars, creating three types of clouds using cotton, and putting together mixtures that just happen to double as reindeer food.

One of the best parts of the month was the holiday musical production titled "Snowbiz," which was put on by the fifth graders at the December PTA meeting. The students worked very hard learning the words to the songs, the skits, movements and lines of the production, and all those dance steps!! Judging by the huge smiles across the faces of the audience, and their thunderous applause...it was definitely a rousing success!!

**Tigers Class of 2013....SAVE THE DATE!!!**

**May 29, 2013 5th Grade Pool Party**

**Gold's Gym @ Rogers Ranch 9am - 1:30pm**

**If you are a fifth grade parent and would like to help plan or chaperone the party, contact Stacy Shults at [stacylshults@yahoo.com](mailto:stacylshults@yahoo.com) or 210-334-7978.**



[www.tuscanyheightspta.org](http://www.tuscanyheightspta.org)

## ***We love our Tiger Staff!!!***

The Staff Appreciation Committee has been working hard to make sure our staff knows how much we appreciate all they do! We began October with a little treat for National Custodian Day. The Spooktacular Luncheon was a huge hit. We celebrated November and December birthdays with cookies, brownies, and fruit. Our Thanksgiving Pie Donation and Staff Gift Wrapping were a huge success! Thanks so much to all who took some time out of their very busy holiday schedule to donate pies and wrap presents for all of the teachers. We really couldn't do it without you and your effort is much appreciated!!!

We are looking forward to many more events in the coming months including Staff Appreciation Week in May. If you are interested in helping out, feel free to email [juliew113@gmail.com](mailto:juliew113@gmail.com).

### **PTA LIFETIME RECIPIENTS 2012-2013**

Every year nominations are accepted for Lifetime PTA Membership awards. These recipients have gone out of their way to support their PTA, school and most of all their students!! For 2012 - 2013, THE PTA is proud to announce the Lifetime PTA Membership recipients. Congratulations to the winners!!!

Mindy Donofrio - PTA Treasurer  
 Deb Goswick - Tuscany Heights Instructional Assistant  
 Danny Rafajko - Tuscany Heights Assistant Principal  
 Karen Wooster - PTA Library Chair

### **Tigers Lending a Helping Paw**

Tuscany Heights students have gone above and beyond the call of duty!! Our Tiger families have helped our Sister School, East Terrell Hills Elementary, in various ways this semester. During Red Ribbon Week THE went "Khaki Krazy" collecting school uniforms. To help make the holiday season brighter, our Tiger families donated new toys and games for the Sister School Toy Drive. This was a huge success and a great way to add smiles to the children of East Terrell Hills. Finally, to end the semester, Tuscany Heights students showed the true meaning of sharing during the holiday season by donating books to our Sister School instead of a book exchange during the Winter Class Parties. If you would like more information on supporting our Sister School please contact [sisterschool@tuscanyheightspta.org](mailto:sisterschool@tuscanyheightspta.org).





# All About Greenback

A **Greenback Donation** is a **tax deductible contribution** to the **Tuscany Heights Elementary PTA**. **100%** of your donation will fund many beneficial and educational PTA programs planned for your children during the 2012-2013 school year, including:

- *Field Trips*
- *Red Ribbon Week*
- *Grandparents Day*
- *Field Day*
- *Staff Appreciation*
- *5<sup>th</sup> Grade End of Year Celebration*
- *Bike Rodeo*
- *Student Enrichment*
- *Arts in Education*
- *Author Visits*
- *Environmental Education*

Donations may be made online at [tuscanyheightspta.org](http://tuscanyheightspta.org) with a credit card, cash or check payable to *Tuscany Heights Elementary PTA*.

**Double your Greenback donation with a donation from your company's Matching Gift Program!** Contact your Human Resources Department for a Matching Gift form and program details.

<i>Donation Levels</i>	
\$150	Tiger
\$100	Partner
\$75	Gold
\$50	Silver
\$25	Bronze

**The Greenback goal for 2012-2013 is \$8,500. So far to date the PTA has received \$6,360 in Greenback Donations. We have met 75% of our goal so far this year!**

*Thank you for generously supporting your PTA!!*

# VOLUNTEERS

**Calling all Volunteers!!! Are you interested in helping out at Tuscany Heights? Our TIGERS need YOU and there is plenty to do!!! Email [volunteers@tuscanyheightspta.org](mailto:volunteers@tuscanyheightspta.org) to get started.**







**370**

*The Tuscan Heights PTA currently has 370 members. Our goal for 2012-2013 is to have at least one member of EVERY Tiger Family and 100% staff join the PTA!! If you haven't yet joined the PTA visit our website or email [membership@tuscanheightspta.org](mailto:membership@tuscanheightspta.org)*

## SHOW YOUR PAW PRIDE!!!



*Don't forget **EVERY FRIDAY** is Tiger Spirit Day for all staff, students and volunteers!!!*

*Show your tiger pride with our great spirit items for this school year. There are grade level contests for the most classroom participation. If you haven't yet purchased your spirit items, you may*

*contact our Spirit Team @*

*[spirititems@tuscanheightspta.org](mailto:spirititems@tuscanheightspta.org)*

**Let's showcase our new Winter Spirit items in January & February.**

**GO TIGERS!!!!!!**



## VETERANS DAY CEREMONY at TUSCANY HEIGHTS

Monday, November 12, 2012 the students at T.H.E. stood in honor of our veterans, as they walked to the flag pole for a Veterans Day Ceremony. We had several fathers and grandfathers of students as well as the family representatives of veterans who have paid the ultimate sacrifice join us for the early service. As a "Leader in Me" campus, T.H.E. Student Council representatives decided that they wanted to lead the Veterans Day activities. Student Council representatives worked diligently placing flags along the drive way of the campus early that morning, helped guide classes to their appropriate areas during the ceremonies, and assisted in many parts of the ceremony. Student Council President, Carter Patton, addressed the campus and Veterans regarding the history of Veterans Day and the gratitude we all feel for their efforts to protect our freedoms. Captains of the safety patrol raised the flags as the Veterans stood at attention. Joseph Ruelas, Student Council Vice President, lead the student body in the Pledge of Allegiance, Texas Pledge and the National Anthem. Lauren Wood, 5th grade representative, read a poem about Veterans Day and Olivia McNeel, Student Council Secretary, honored the Veterans from many generations who have given the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom by releasing red, white, and blue balloons. It was a beautiful sight to see the flag waving proudly in the brisk wind as the students paid tribute. Patriotism was the word for the day.

### *PTA General Meeting / Performance*

*The December PTA General Meeting was held on Tuesday, December 4. Thank you to the Brownie Troup 766 for opening our meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Great job, girls! If your troop would like to participate in a future meeting please contact [programs@tuscanheightspta.org](mailto:programs@tuscanheightspta.org).*

*It was a winter wonderland as the fantastic fifth graders took to the stage with their musical performance, "Snow Biz" at the December PTA General Meeting. Singing, dancing, and snowballs filled the show! A big thank you to our music teachers, Mr. Brown and Mrs. Neibel, all the fifth grade students and teachers, and many volunteers who showcased their talent and hard work in this amazing production. It was "snow" much fun!*



## T.H.E. PTA Inspirational Writing Contests

THE PTA holds grade level writing contests before each PTA meeting in support of our children's creativity and writing success.

In November and December, Tuscan Heights focused on the Covey trait "Put First Things First". The fifth graders submitted written poems and essays for our PTA writing contest describing this trait. Our winning student was Isabel Morales from Ms. Johle's fantastic fifth grade class. Both Isabel and Ms. Johle received prizes of recognition from *The Invitation Chicks*.  
Congratulations, Isabel and Ms. Johle!

In February, we will ask our terrific third graders to tell us about the Covey trait "Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood". Start thinking about what you would like to write, third grade!

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### Put First Things First by Isabel Morales

I want to play,  
play all day.  
But I cannot,  
Because I have been taught.  
To get into a good college,  
you have to use your knowledge.  
So instead I work a while,  
then I smile.  
I stand up proudly,  
then I say loudly.  
"I have finished my homework!"  
"Now I have no work!"  
I go play,  
and smile all day!  
So now you know what  
it means to put first things first.  
Work first then play.

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## FITNESS FACTS

Happy New Year! We are looking forward to another exciting semester in the PE Department! We would like to thank all of the parents and grandparents who came to dance with us on Dance Day 2012. What an incredible turnout! We hope you all had as good a time as we did. Thank you all for supporting our program. Please remember that you are always welcome to come and visit during your son or daughter's PE class. We would love to have you! We have lots of fun things scheduled for this semester: badminton, gymnastics, basketball, soccer, hockey, track & field, softball and kickball. That ought to keep our students busy for awhile! We also have two very important events coming up. On March 5th, at Littleton Gymnasium at 6:30, Tuscany Heights will be participating in Showcase of Stars. Showcase is a very special program that we do every other year with other schools in the district. Our students will be trying out for a chance to go and participate. We are allowed to only take 40 students per grade level (a total of 240 students). Your son or daughter will be learning two routines over the next few weeks. Be looking for a permission to be coming home at the end of February for those students who were chosen. We wish we could take all of our students because we are so very proud of them. Unfortunately, we have to restrict the number of students because of space in the gym. The other event will be for our 4th and 5th grade students. They will be trying to qualify for the 4th & 5th grade Track Meet which will be held at Heroes Stadium in May. We will choose students (based on scores) at the end of our Track & Field unit in April. Be looking for a permission slip to come home with your child. You can always come to both events even if your child is not participating to help cheer our Tigers on to victory!

Yours in Fitness,  
Mrs. Burges & Mrs. Fields



### 3rd ANNUAL RUN FOR THE HEIGHTS Saturday, February 23, 2013

5K Run / Walk, Kid's Fun Run & Health Fair  
Tigers Think Win-Win!!!

Race registration is open now!! There are class level contests based on the number of registrations with some great prizes. If you register by 2/1/13 you will receive a t-shirt and goodie bag plus \$5 discount off of the 5K run. Registrations are accepted up to the day of the race. Opening ceremony begins at 8am!

For Sponsorship opportunities, please contact Denise Jones at [\(210\)870-0706](tel:2108700706) or Maria Hubbard at [\(210\)867-3834](tel:2108673834).

Please visit the website for more information  
[www.runfortheheights.tuscanyheightspta.org](http://www.runfortheheights.tuscanyheightspta.org)

