

November 2013
Volume 4, Issue 1

TUSCANY HEIGHTS GROWLIN' GOOD NEWS

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T.H.E. Tiger Tellers

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Welcome Back Team Tuscany!!!

It feels like the school year has just begun, but fall is here and our Tuscany Tigers have been proactive! We started the year with the end in mind and we are well on our way to achieving great things. Thanks to your generous donations and support, your T.H.E. PTA is and will be implementing educational and enriching activities throughout this school year. From donating school uniforms to our Sister School to avenging bullies during Red Ribbon Week, our students are learning how to be leaders on campus. Our Tigers also learned about teamwork from an interactive and energizing visit from Drum Café.

When our staff, teachers, students, and families, come together as one team, great things will happen. We are still Campin' for Cash, so go online at tuscanyheightspta.org and make a tax-deductible donation to keep supporting our team. Our only other major fundraiser will be our fourth annual *Run for the Heights*, so save the date for February 22, 2014, and get ready to run or walk with your family and community in support of our school.

WatchDOGS is back in swing with a successful start to our 2nd year on campus. We still have openings, so please go online to sign up to be a hero of the hallway.

Stay proactive and BE PTA this year. Your T.H.E. PTA Board is here to serve you and your children. We are looking forward to another exciting, enriching, and educational year!

Go Team Tuscany!

Mindy Waters
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www.tuscanyheightspta.org

Celebrating our "Team Tuscany Coaches"

T.H.E. Staff Appreciation is working hard to show all of our staff how thankful we are for everything they do! We started off the school year with a Welcome Back Breakfast to let our awesome staff know we're looking forward to another great year. During National Custodian Week, we gave our custodians a little treat to show our appreciation for their hard work. The last week of October, we hosted our Spooktacular Staff Luncheon and it was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who has helped out with these events.

We couldn't do it without you!

We have many volunteer opportunities coming up before Thanksgiving and Christmas Break, including our Staff Gift Wrapping in December. If you are interested in helping or would like more information on Staff Appreciation, please contact staffappreciation@tuscanheightspta.org.

Showing Love for our Tiger Grandparents!!



Hundreds of Tiger Grandparents showed up to the school on Friday, September 6th for our 4th annual Grandparents Day. T.H.E. PTA hosted coffee in the library and then the Grandparents joined their students in their classroom for art projects, to read stories, creative writing, games, and lots of fun!! To honor their grandparents, the children made cards, drawings and necklaces as gifts.

We are so proud to have so many family members supporting our Tuscany Tigers!!!



Meet the Teacher Night / Orientation

Welcome Back Team Tuscany!

This year we are all on the same team - staff, parents, and students! The hallways were buzzing with laughter, excitement, and anticipation during our 2013 Meet the Teacher Nights. Students met their new "coach" for the year, bought the latest spirit wear and agendas, picked up their new Car tags, and learned all about their new "team" for this year. Tusky was eager to greet all the faces, new and old.

Parents were able to learn about the various volunteer opportunities and also receive an overview of their child's upcoming school year and grade level orientation. The back to school fever was definitely in the air. Off to another great year...go get 'em TIGERS!



TIGER BOOK CLUB is a great way to share your child's birthday, teacher appreciation or birthday, and other special occasions at Tuscany Heights. Donation forms will go home around your child's birthday to purchase a book for the library. You may include a picture and special message that will be placed in the front cover of the book. Your child will be the first to check out the book and once returned it can be shared with all Tuscany Tiger Readers!!!





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 do so on the PTA website or contact our Spirit Team @ spirititems@tuscanheightspta.org

GO TIGERS!!!!!!



THE PTA PRESENTS... YAHOO/BOOHOO

T.H.E. PTA hosted a social gathering the first morning of school for the new Kindergarten parents. The PTA Hospitality Committee along with other PTA officers and staff welcomed about 25 new Kinder Tiger parents. They were encouraged to meet other parents and discuss the excitement for what is to come as well as sadness that their little one is really growing up. Mrs. Bailey presented a nice poem called "Thoughts at the Bottom of the Beanstalk" which was a cute perspective for helping parents practice saying goodbye and cheering on their little ones.



2nd Annual Tiger Family Fun Night!!!

The first general PTA meeting of 2013-2014 was held on September 3rd, presented as our 2nd annual Family Fun Night. Thank you to the Cub Scout Pack 9 for the opening flag ceremony & Pledge of Allegiance. After a successful first week of school, Tuscanys Tigers celebrated with our 2nd Annual Family Fun Night that included our first PTA meeting and Watch D.O.G.S. Kick-Off. Staff and families enjoyed dinner from one of our seven food trucks parked in the back parking lot of our campus. From hot dogs to sushi, everyone ate delicious food and stayed cool with snow cones and ice cream. Kids enjoyed jumping roping, hula hooping, and playing with friends while parents learned all about our successful WatchD.O.G.S. program. Many dads and father-figures signed up to be a hero of the hallway at Tuscanys this year!

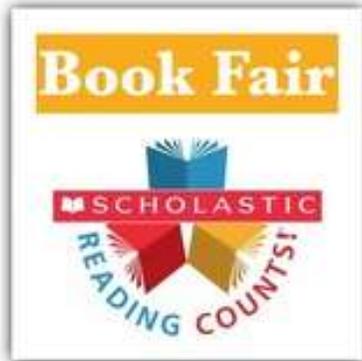
Say Hello to the Team Tuscanys D.O.G.S. "Dads Of Great Students"

Join the WatchD.O.G.S. and become the "Hero of the Hallway" one day a year at school. You will help with drop-off / pick-up, visit your child's classroom, have lunch with your child, play at recess, and WATCH the school for safety measures throughout the day. This is a

GREAT way for fathers and father-figures to get involved at Tuscanys Heights. Our 2nd annual Family Fun Night kicked off this year's program. There are many available days this school year for T.H.E. fathers to serve as a WatchD.O.G. If you have not been a WatchD.O.G. yet, now is the time to sign up! If you served as a WatchD.O.G. last year, please consider returning for another day!

For more information or to sign up please contact
watchdogs@tuscanysheightspta.org

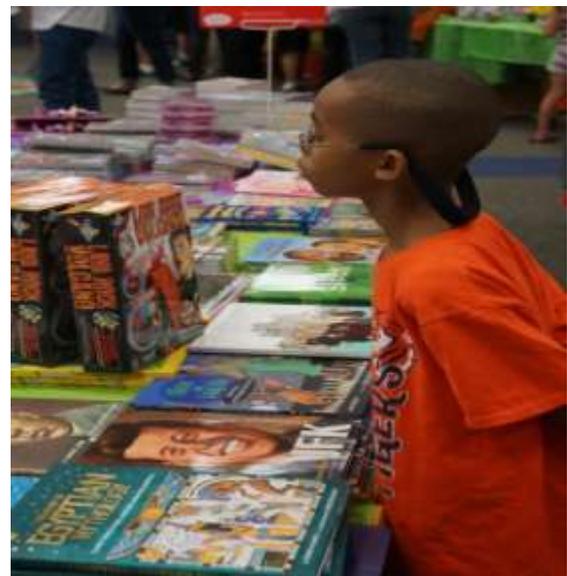




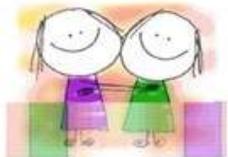
Team Tuscany Loves to Read!!

Our Tiger Families & staff bought roughly 4,000 books and other items to raise over \$5,000 in cash profit for the Tuscany Heights Library. In addition to the free books earned, all profits earned from the Book Fair will be used to purchase new books for our library shelves. We exceeded our total sales from last year and look forward to the next Book Fair in the Spring.

Way to go Tiger Readers!!!



Our Sister School
East Terrell Hills Elementary



Sister School is an alliance between East Terrell Hills Elementary and Tuscany Heights Elementary. T.H.E. assists with volunteering, mentoring and collections for shoes, school supplies, car seats, winter coats and holiday toy drives. T.H.E. Tigers came together once again offering up school uniforms at the beginning of the year. Team Tuscany also supported our Sister School with cakes and volunteers for their Fall Festival in October. If you would like more information on supporting our Sister School please contact sisterschool@tuscanyheightspta.org.



THE FANTASTIC FOURTH

GRADE SPOTLIGHT

(from left to right): Mrs. Welch, Mrs. Forsyth, Mrs. Luna, Mrs. Morris, Mrs. Valdez, Mrs. Cowan, & Mrs. Cue



Fourth grade has kicked off the year to a FANTASTIC start!!

In math we are moving from our multiplication and division unit to fractions and decimals. We are studying character traits in reading. We have been working on personal narratives along with revising and editing in writing.

We are beginning to dive into learning about expository writing and the difference between that and personal narratives. In science, we are studying the scientific method. In social studies we are working on the four regions of Texas, the central plains, great plains, mountains and basins, and the coastal plains. We have lots more to look forward to in the 4th grade!!

The October PTA general meeting was held on Tuesday, October 1st. Thank you to the Cub Scouts Pack 89 for opening our meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance & Flag Ceremony. We kicked off the meeting with a Pep Rally introducing the Fantastic Fourth Grade and their athletic exhibition in the gym. Thank you to Mrs. Fields and Mrs. Burges for all of their hard work and preparation. For the students, it is always a very special event when their parents are able to see them perform. We want to extend a special mention of Ethan Pixton from Mrs. Valdez's class who wrote the winning essay with the title: Be Proactive. We all enjoyed hearing his creative writing when he read it in front of the audience.



All ABOARD THE BRAIN TRAIN!!!

New Motor Lab / Brain Station

The newly founded class at Tuscany Heights Elementary is the Brain Station. In the Brain Station children are set in a journey of discovery in brain training. The objective of the Brain Station is to use gross motor skills with academic learning as a combination activity to boost brain energy.

Each grade level visits the Brain Station in an eight-day rotation. The classroom is set up to present eight stations that each student will visit. Each station is visited for a total of three minutes. Traveling through each station, a child will focus on using jumping, rolling, and tossing as a gross motor skill. Linking the curriculum in math and language arts is just the bonus feature! For example, one gross motor skill we are learning in all grade levels emphasizes jumping with an arm technique. This method of jumping prepares our students to become better athletes in basketball, track, and volleyball. Moving on to eye/hand coordination, our older grades, 3rd-5th, are working to catch a tennis ball in a can while they are reading sight words. Many students enjoy the challenge of trying to never miss catching a ball. Speaking of a challenge, have you ever wobbled? All of our friends here at Tuscany Heights have balanced on a wobble board. This idea is centered to help children in body functions while walking, running, and kicking. As we push the bar, our students are not only wobbling but skip counting by numbers to enhance their math skills.

This exciting journey has only begun here at Tuscany Heights. As a team we are looking forward to challenging our students to many more gross motor skills while enhancing their academic learning.



T.H.E. PTA Presents....Drum Café

Dale Monnin and his Drum Café South team brought experience and an exciting personal touch to each of the Tuscany Heights students in September. The Drum Café experience started for our students when they entered the cafeteria and each got a drum from the performers. Each student was able to handle an authentic African drum called a djembe.

Throughout the program, the students were taken on a journey to South Africa where the original Drum Café was actually in a café. When the idea was brought to Texas, Dale decided to keep "Café" in the name as a metaphorical reference of a place to meet, talk, and connect through the language of rhythm and tones.

The Drum Café certainly exceeded all expectations. The high energy presentation of how drums are used in Africa as an integral part of social interaction and celebration showed our students a unique way to interact without words.

This program helped the students and teachers learn how drums can be used to develop coordination, memory and most important of all, unity. The greatest lesson that our students learned from the program is that if we "worked together, things always come out better"; having good harmony in a team is an essential part to make it work.





Campin' for Cash!

Tuscany Heights 4th Annual **GREENBACK** Fundraiser

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 2013-2014 school year, including:

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

Donations may be made online at 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

Greenback Goals:

\$10,000 - Mrs. Bailey, Mr. Rafajko and Tusky camp out on the rooftop of Tuscany Heights Elementary!!!

\$7,500 - Pajama Day at Tuscany Heights, Friday, September 27th! **ACHIEVED!**

\$2,500 - Look for Tusky around campus as he prepares to camp out on the rooftop! **ACHIEVED!**

We are still Campin' for Cash! So far we have raised \$8,500 in Greenback Donations. When we raise **\$10,000** for our school programs, we will send our principals and Tusky to the roof top!



Thank you for generously supporting your PTA!!





JOIN PTA!



Are you a proud member of T.H.E. PTA? It's not too late to join! Our current membership is just over 300 members. We are striving to surpass our last year total of 373. By joining T.H.E. PTA, you not only support our school, but it allows you to be more involved and informed in matters concerning your child's education and well being. If you would like more info on becoming a member, contact Angie Westphall at membership@tuscanyheightspta.org

VOLUNTEERS

Calling all Volunteers!!! Are you interested in helping out at Tuscan Heights? Our TIGERS need YOU and there is plenty to do!!! Email volunteers@tuscanyheightspta.org to get started.



The Fall collection for Box Tops For Education is complete and we have earned \$2,458!!

Congratulations to the classroom grade level winners: Cervenka (K), Schmid (1), Branch (2), Kramer (3), Forsyth (4), & Blackler (5). These classes earned a kickball game reward with Mrs. Bailey and Mr. Rafajko. We couldn't have done this without the effort of kids, parents, and teachers! As coordinators, we are really appreciative of a great group of volunteers who helped in the counting and sorting!

Our next and final collection for the school year will be in January. Start clipping now!!



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. For October, the fourth graders were given the topic of the Covey Trait, "Be Proactive". We were amazed to see such great talent among our Tigers! Our winning student was Ethan Pixton from Mrs. Valdez's fourth grade class. Great job, Ethan and keep up the FANTASTIC writing!

Thank you to The Invitation Chicks for providing both Ethan and Mrs. Valdez a small token of our appreciation for their efforts.

In December, the fifth graders will write about "what they would do with their time if there were no cell phones, TV, video games, or Internet." Come see our winning student writer at the December PTA meeting!

BE PROACTIVE by Ethan Pixton

To be proactive you are responsible for your actions, attitudes, moods and life. It may be hard, but if you make things go smooth it will be easier. Also don't get mad when things don't go your way. You should also know your circle of influence so that you know what can be controlled. There are two parts of the circle. Circle of concern which you can't control and, circle of influence which you can control. Think of good responses, consequences and the situation you are in. Soda is like blowing up at someone or something which only makes the situation worse and when you shake it, it goes everywhere. Water, on the other side, is good to be like because even when you shake it, it's calm and is still good to drink which means even when things don't go your way, you stay calm and whatever you do stay calm. You should also learn from your situations. This is what proactive means to me.



T.H.E. RUN FOR THE HEIGHTS **Saturday, February 22, 2014**

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

Join us for the 4th Annual Run for the Heights



Do you own a business or work for a company that might be interested in sponsoring this year's event? For Sponsorship opportunities, please contact Jennifer Bissen at (214) 529-9524 or runfortheheights@tuscanyheightspta.org



Please visit the website
www.runfortheheights.tuscanyheightspta.org

www.tuscanyheightspta.org

Tuscany Heights Tiger Tellers

Storytelling is ALIVE and well at Tuscany Heights. We have 30 enthusiastic 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders who attend twice a month to hone their skills at telling stories in front of anxious listeners of all ages. This year we're using the ipads to create digital stories, listen to our own voices and reflect on how we can improve the speed and tone to create the mood and setting, and there's so many other apps that lend toward developing our own stories outside the ones in books. This is a very exciting addition to our club!

We've already had two wonderful opportunities to share our tales and I wanted to share those pictures with you. On October 8, 2013, two of our seasoned 4th graders, Sophia LaBeau and Avery Neale, met me on the 3rd floor of our downtown Chile Pepper Main Library to assist me in the "Beginning a Storytelling Club in the Library" workshop. Both shared their favorite tales with the eager librarians and were treated with great approval from all! It's so much easier to convince adults how important storytelling is to every child when the children are actually there to answer questions and model what they have learned. A huge thank you goes out to the parents of these children who took the time and gas to make this opportunity happen for their children! I'd like to thank Mrs. Bailey and Mr. Rafajko for supporting us this day and also the teachers of these students who allowed them to leave a bit early to get downtown in time.

On Sunday, October 29th, Guadalupe State Park had their annual "Halloween in the Park" at their amphitheater. They weren't quite themselves that night - Grim Reaper, Witch, and a zombie - scary. They were perfectly dressed to tell spooky tales to the young and middle aged kids who all shuffled in every 10 minutes or so before the trick or treating took place down the winding park trail. These three Tuscany tellers were amazing and the audience loved each one of them. Thank you to Cara Cervenka and her family, Gabby Alvarado and her family, and Avery Neale and her family! Boo!

We have another event coming up that we'll be preparing for. We'll be telling winter tales at the Alamo tree lighting ceremony on Friday, November 29th. There will be a children's area set up downtown by the tree with fun activities for all, including our storytelling. I hope as many of you as possible can come down and support these students. The tree lighting is quite an event in itself! We'll be there from 3:00 - 6:00pm.

