

Part II of II: Campus and Department News

May 12, 2006

Wal-Mart Foundation Teachers of the Year



Northbrook Middle School's Stephanie Walton and four other SBISD educators were honored this week as part of the 11th annual Teacher of the Year program, sponsored by the Wal-Mart and Sam's Club Foundation. Recognition was held on many campuses Tuesday, which was National Teacher's Day.

Other SBISD award recipients, according to Wal-Mart, are Shawn Edwards of Westwood Elementary, Susan Howard of Northbrook High, Aida Lourdes Oliva of Tiger Trail School for Early Learning and Michael Marker of Ridgecrest Elementary.

Each winning teacher receives \$1,000 for their school, a \$100 gift card for classroom supplies, a Teacher of the Year polo-style shirt and a personalized certificate.

Through the Teacher of the Year program, Wal-Mart has contributed \$68,000 to local schools, \$437,000 in Texas and almost \$4.9 million nationwide.

In separate but related district news, SBISD named its 2006 Elementary and Secondary Teachers of the Year during the Service Awards Reception held May 4. To read more, visit <http://www.springbranchisd.com/news/050506toy.htm>.

Magnificent Musicals

Stratford High School theater department students received a highly coveted **Tommy Tune Award** for Best Ensemble/Chorus during a May 1 awards event held at the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts downtown.

Stratford High Playhouse's production of *42nd St.* had earned five nominations, including Best



Musical. Students performed “Money” at the May 1 awards event.

Five more nominations were earned by other theater programs in SBISD. In all, 45 high schools competed this year.

Joining Stratford High at the awards podium were student actresses Christina Stroup of Spring Woods High and Vania Phuoc of Memorial High. Both earned the \$2,000 **Tommy Tune Scholarship**; only six such scholarships were awarded.

The annual Tommy Tune Awards program is named for the Houston performer and director. Theatre Under the Stars formed the awards program to honor high school musical theater productions.

In separate theater department news, Spring Woods High’s One Act Play won a top ranking in the **District UIL One Act Play** competition held in April. *The Boys Next Door* also advanced to area finals where it was chosen Alternate Play.

UIL One Act Play winners from Spring Woods High included the Best Technical Crew Award, given to Joel Bukholder, Kristina Love, Sara Baldwin and Melissa Molsberry. Honorable mentions for All-Star Cast included Alizsha Pennington and Wesley Miller, and All-Star Cast winners were Zach Irvin, Kendrick Mitchell, Darren Converse and Leif Steenson.

In Region III Area I One Act Play competition, special recognition was awarded to the following Spring Woods High members: Zach Irvin, All-Star Cast; Darren Converse, Best Actor; Anne Yancey and Terry Hibbert, Directors; Sara Baldwin, Technical Award; and Kendrick Michell, honorable mention All-Star Cast.

Best High Schools



Memorial and Stratford high schools ranked No. 102 and No. 187 on *Newsweek* magazine’s annual list of Best High Schools, published May 1. The schools made the magazine’s Top 200 list by earning high scores on The Challenge

Index, the publication’s formula for ranking schools. High schools were ranked based on the number of Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate tests taken by all students at a school in 2005 divided by the number of graduating seniors. Washington Post education reporter Jay Mathews created the list.



Undebatable

Several SBISD debaters and debate teams took top honors during the National Forensic League’s **Space City District Tournament**, which was held April 6-8 at Memorial High School.

Qualifying for nationals were Andrew Menger and Daniel Jung of Memorial High, 1st place in policy debate, and John Lewis, repeat district champion, 1st place, Lincoln-Douglas Debate. Alternates for the Lincoln-Douglas debates are Nalin Verma, also of Memorial High, and Harry Yu of Spring Woods High. Jackie Pirtle, also of Spring Woods High, was named alternate in dramatic interpretation.

Stratford High seniors Marina Irfan and Samantha Silberstein placed sixth in the duo interpretation category.

District speech and debate coaches are Cecil Trent of Memorial High, Lloyd Clingman at Stratford High, and Victoria Beard and assistant coach Anthony Yim at Spring Woods High.

Tomorrow's Architects



Students in the Guthrie Center's highly regarded **Architectural Computer-Aided Drafting (CAD) program** have won multiple awards, earned special scholarships and even built a large, three-story Victorian dollhouse for charity in recent months.

The doll house, standing 4 feet, was built to enhance model-building skills and as a community-service project for the **Oscar Night Silent Auction**. Proceeds were donated to the

Ronald McDonald House, which provides comfort and support to families whose children are undergoing treatment for cancer or other serious illnesses at the Texas Medical Center.

Ten students in the Guthrie Center's Architectural CAD program took home 10 out of a possible 15 awards and a large portion of \$11,550 in gift certificates and scholarships during the **Michael G. Meyers High School Design** competition.

In separate news, Architectural CAD student Alex Guzman recently won an **architectural academic scholarship** of \$12,500 from the Houston Hispanic Architects & Engineer Organization. Guzman received the award May 4 in a special luncheon presentation.



The student design competition, held April 28, was sponsored by the Houston chapter of the American Institute of Architects, four architectural firms, the University of Houston and Texas Art Supply.

This year's student competition project involved the hypothetical design of a Music Hall of Fame in midtown Houston. Guthrie Center Architectural CAD students placed 2nd and 3rd place in individual and group categories and won six separate honorable mention awards.

Student award winners include Luis Salcedo, Savannah Speights, Ryan Jaster, Juliana Shea, Luis Espinosa, Wilmer Rivera, Alfredo Lopez, Zeitoun Kamougue, Chris Gregory, Andres Alfaro, Holly Hodson, Laura Meador, Adam Rodriguez, Daniel Barrientos and Franco Montoya.

Architectural CAD instructor is Sonia Greiner. Her students have competed and placed in the design competition for five years now. Greiner recently earned one of several BP A+ for Energy Program grants valued at \$10,000 to support an Architectural CAD Solar-Powered Model Home project.

New SBESA officers

The new Spring Branch Education Support Association has been unanimously chosen. Officers for the 2006-2007 school year are: Belinda Warren, president; Deb McShan, president-elect; Maria Campos, vice president; Laura Escobedo, secretary; Carlton Sands, treasurer; Anna Loveless, parliamentarian, and Jan Lampart, immediate past president.

The new board will be installed May 18 during the annual SBESA Installation Dinner. Student and member scholarships will be awarded, too.

World Odyssey

Three SBISD campus teams that competed in the **Texas State Odyssey of the Mind** Competition in April will now advance to World Finals planned May 24-27 at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. More than 700 student teams will compete in Iowa.



Winning teams advancing to **World Finals** are Meadow Wood Elementary for 1st place in Division I-Geometry Structure; Memorial Middle, 1st place, Division II-Tech Transfer; and Spring Woods High, for 2nd place, Division III, Jungle Bloke. In addition, Adriana Adame from Westchester Academy for International Studies won a special OMER Award for exceptional spirit and creativity.

Odyssey of the Mind is an international education program that offers creative problem-solving

learning for children and teenagers.

Earlier this spring, 15 Odyssey of the Mind campus teams earned state contest berths. Student teams with outstanding performances in the **Houston Region Odyssey of the Mind** competition included:

Division I-Elementary Schools: Meadow Wood Elementary, 2nd place, for Geometric Structures; Sherwood Elementary, 5th place, Geometric Structures; Memorial Drive Elementary, 5th place, The Great Parade; Terrace Elementary, 6th place, Ancient Egypt.

Division II-Middle Schools: Memorial Middle, 1st place, Tech Transfer; Spring Oaks Middle, 2nd place, The Great Parade; Memorial Middle, 2nd place, Ancient Egypt and Geometric Structures; Spring Oaks Middle, 4th place, Jungle Bloke; Westchester Academy, 6th place, Tech Transfer.

Division III-High Schools: Spring Woods High, 1st place, Jungle Bloke; Westchester Academy Team A, 2nd place, Jungle Bloke; Spring Woods High, 2nd place, Ancient Egypt; Westchester Academy Team B, 2nd place, Geometric Structures; Westchester Academy Team A, 5th place, Geometric Structures.



In recent days, several SBISD students who have been actively involved in the Odyssey of the Mind program and adult chaperones attended the **Odyssey of the Mind Eurofest** festival. The showcase event was held April 29 through May 4 in Wroclaw, Poland. The event travels from nation to nation each year.

Campus News & Events

Three of SBISD's 21st Century After-School Program sites have been chosen to take part in **NASA's Math and Science Pilot** program this month. Campuses selected for the NASA program, which will be conducted through May 18, are **Hollibrook, Treasure Forest** and **Westwood** elementary schools. A concluding event will be held May 20 at Baylor College of Medicine.

More than 90 families attended a reading presentation during a recent **Family Literacy Night** held at Sherwood Elementary. Ana Padron at Sherwood, among others, helped organize the special campus meeting of children and parents. Families received reading tips and received follow-up information. The meeting was sponsored and supported by Literary Advance of Houston.

The Navy Band New Orleans' contemporary musical group, **The Express**, performed from 1-3 p.m. May 11 at the Guthrie Center. Each member is a graduate of the Armed Forces School of Music. Scheduled to join them at the Guthrie Center was Petty Officer 1st Class Shawn Olin, a member of the **U.S. Armed Forces Cycling Team**.

In separate Guthrie Center news, the **Navy Jr. ROTC**'s instructors and cadets have restored unit status to **Distinguished with Academic Honors**, which will allow the ROTC unit to nominate up to three cadets to each of three U.S. military academies next year.

Frostwood, Hunters Creek and Memorial Drive elementaries sponsored the **SBISD Spanish Olympics** at Hunters Creek Elementary on May 12.

On May 9, Naomi Allen with Town & Country Washington Mutual presented **Spring Branch Elementary** leaders and students with a "Wamoola" check of \$1,124 for the campus. For the past four years, students have been able to make weekly deposits and earn interest and prizes through Washington Mutual school accounts.

In separate Spring Branch Elementary news, a student-led civic project, **Pennies for Patients**, raised \$1,587 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Earlier this year, Assistant Principal Michele Gabriel and several students met former U.S. President George H.W. Bush after raising more than \$1,000 for the **Bush-Clinton Hurricane Relief Fund**. SBISD employee Paul Bryant created the check used in the photo setting. It featured President Bush's birth date as the routing number. It may be soon displayed in the Bush Presidential Library at Texas A&M University at College Station.



Twenty-two-year-old Army Specialist Tighe Barlen earned a rousing welcome earlier this year when he visited third, fourth and fifth-graders at **Shadow Oaks Elementary**. The students had written letters and made greeting cards for Tighe while he was stationed in Iraq. Tighe is

the nephew of Wilchester Elementary health fitness teacher Anne Daily. The student support project was organized by music teacher Karen Donathen.

Hollibrook Elementary students who attended the NBA All-Star Jam Session earlier this year each received a copy of author Kevin Carroll's "Rules of the Red Rubber Ball." Students also visited the NBA Cares Booth, where they listened to books being read and even read to others. Later, Tracey McGrady and Dikembe Mutombo bought tickets so that students could attend a Houston Rockets game.

In separate basketball season news, Spring Forest Middle School's Jo Arlitt was selected to be a **Teacher of the Game**. Gulf States Toyota also distributed tickets to 40 students so that they could attend the April 15 Rockets game.

A separate student fund-raiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society held at **Buffalo Creek Elementary** raised more than \$1,800 for the nonprofit group.

Memorial Drive Elementary conducted a weeklong study of China beginning on April 24.

KPMG paid employees to tutor students at **Spring Woods Middle School** before TAKS testing earlier this spring.



More than 500 middle school parents, students and community members took part in **Spring Forest Middle School's Celebration of Diversity** earlier this year. The campus event included African and flamenco dancers, mariachi music, ethnic foods and traditions, and other special exhibits. Among displays, a wall of flags reflected the ancestry of students, staff and parents. The well-received evening program included special bus transportation for those unable to easily attend.

In separate news, **Spring Forest Middle** teachers Marie Holbrook, Ro Luecken, Jo Arlitt, Diane Kirkland, Javier Torres and Donna Handlin have been awarded a **HP K-12 Technology for Teaching grant** valued at about \$35,000. The award for each of the five teachers includes an HP Tablet PC, digital projector, digital camera with accessories, all-in-one printer scanner copier, professional development and \$500 stipend.

The first **Family Reading Night**, held in March at Westchester Academy for International Studies, was rated a success with students, parents, grandparents and teachers sharing a meal and joining in a group book discussion. Books were read and discussed during the evening.

Housman Elementary School raised more than \$3,400 this spring when it sold \$5 raffle tickets for a beautiful **Victorian Valentine quilt**. Principal Jerona Williams created the benefit quilt. Raffle proceeds help make possible student educational trips. The very detailed quilt was won by SBISD Board of Trustees member Mary Grace Landrum.

Pine Shadows Elementary students prepared for TAKS earlier this year with a "Survivor's Island" science camp that combined tribes, banners and bandanas with learning. Students who "survived" also reviewed mass, weight, and other math and science facts and concepts.

Students at the **Bear Boulevard School for Early Learning** celebrated friends, reading and writing April 2-8 as part of The Week of the Young Child. Weeklong events sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children concluded with cupcake decorating.

Campus Awards & Acclaim

The College of Education and Human Development at **Texas A&M University** honored two SBISD educators during a recent Dean's Roundtable, which was held in College Station. In all, 18 teachers and administrators earned awards.

Honored by the College were **Treasure Forest Elementary School Principal Imelda de la Guardia**, who was sponsored by the Houston A&M Club, and first-grade **Wilchester Elementary teacher Carol De León**, who was sponsored by SBISD residents and active parents Eddie and Joe Mattei. SBISD administrator **Diane Jackson** serves on the College of Education Advisory Council.

Two Memorial High juniors, Samantha Gilley and Nancy Cheng, were honored as winners earlier this year of the **National Council of Teachers of English Writing Awards**. Only 628 students across the nation earned the awards this year.

Four Memorial High choirs attended the **Heritage Festival** in Orlando, Florida, this year and returned with the following prizes: Combined Women's Choir, Bel Canto Choir and Kantorei Men's Choir all received Silver ratings; Schola Cantorum earned a Gold rating, placing 1st among Madrigal choirs. The campus choirs also earned the Spirit Award trophy for outstanding camaraderie. Judges included three university music professors.



Amira Fawcett, a 2005 graduate of Memorial High and staff artist for the school newspaper, the *Anvil*, has won UIL competition's **Tops in Texas Award** in the Student Art division. Her winning work was a pen and pencil drawing of U.S. Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts.

The *Reata*, Memorial High's yearbook, was featured in the **Yearbook Yearbook** published by Taylor Publishing Co. as a top example for design and theme. The 2005 *Reata* editors were Marissa Eubank, Amy Holland and Lyndy Yossundharakul. Jina David is the yearbook advisor.

The 2005 *Reata* yearbook was also chosen as a **Gold Medalist** winner by the Columbia University Press Association, placing it among the top 10 percent of student yearbooks published in the nation.

The same yearbook won several state level awards, including four 1st places. Top award winners are students Arden Larberg, Karen Fisher, Madison Slovacek, Joey Van Susteren and Mary Tuma. Van Susteren also won 3rd place individually, and for work he did with Emily Watkins. Watkins won 2nd place for a separate story. The staff won honorable mention for a sports feature, and for theme selection and theme development. The yearbook won a **Distiguated Merit** award, or 1st place rating, too.

On May 11, **Stratford High's Mnemosyne Yearbook** was distributed for the first time ever as a full-color yearbook. The 400-page volume was student produced and has won many local and national awards, including Silver and Bronze awards from Columbia Scholastic

Press Association. Yearbook adviser is Kim Lynch. Editor-in-Chief was Emma Pierce; assistant editor is Maggie Othold.

An eight-member Stratford High student team that placed first in their division during a recent **Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS) TEAMS** competition held in Austin has earned even bigger recognition. The math and science students placed 20th in the nation out of 1,338 student teams, earning them national finalist honors. Team adviser is teacher Brianna Rapini.

In **foreign language news**, several SBISD classes attended lunches organized by the **World Affairs Council** and sponsored by local businesses. In March, Italian students at Westchester Academy for International Studies dined with Consul General Cristiano Maggipinto. Later, French students at Memorial High and Westchester Academy met Houston Consul General Patrick Berron. The lunch was sponsored by Anadarko Petroleum.

In related news, Memorial High had several **Gold Medal** winners in the **2006 National Latin exams**: Carla Lewis, Latin 1; Kate Phillips, Latin 2, and Laura Gilmore, Level 3. Meredith Zern from Northbrook High won a **Gold Medal** for Latin, Level 2.

The Memorial High-based rock band *Lust Charm*, with sophomore Phil Lemire, was named a 1st place winner in the **Battle of the Bands “Rock Revolution,”** held March 31. The band also won a \$300 cash prize and five hours studio recording time. The Guthrie Center and its Digital Filmmaking & Commercial Photography Department sponsored the event. About 300 people attended.

Northbrook High’s head athletic trainer, Mark Phillips, has been chosen as one of the **2006 Athletic Trainers of the Year** by the Greater Houston Football Coaches’ Association. He received a special plaque and was photographed at the association’s annual membership barbecue and business meeting at the Rice University Stadium.

Stratford High Mu Alpha Theta Math club sponsor Brenda James took three of her students to the **Rice University Math Contest** earlier this year and returned with several awards: Eunsub Lee placed 5th in Geometry and 7th in Advanced Topics, and Jun Hong placed 8th in Advanced Topics.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held March 21 at Stratford High to dedicate the renovated **Backyard** baseball facility. Several Board of Trustees members attended the event and Principal Ann Kucera cut the ribbon and threw out the first pitch. The field renovations were paid for by an anonymous donor. Theme for the evening was “If you build it, they will come,” from the iconic film *Field of Dreams*.

Landrum Middle School seventh-grader Gustavo Pina and brothers Marvin and Edwin Mendoza of Spring Shadows Elementary won full scholarships to the **Glassell School of Art** this summer. Gustavo’s work won a Best Middle School prize from the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo Art Show. Marvin Mendoza has earned an art school scholarship for two years in a row.

Do you news to share? E-mail [School Zone](#) using. Or for details, call Andrea Resendiz or Steve Brunsman in the Communications Dept. at 713-464-1511, Ext. 2272. Final deadline for this year is May 15.