

Your Link To The News Within SAISD

Vol. 11 • No. 14

April 9, 2010

Cooper Center to harvest sun power to go even greener

Environmentally-friendly efforts already under way at a West Side campus are set to heat up through the installation of solar panels. "We have an opportunity to become the



TEES Senior Research Engineer San Antonio operations Matt Koch (far right) goes over blueprints for a greener Cooper Center with (I to r) Kamal ElHabr, city of San Antonio Environmental Policy Special Projects Manager Liza Meyer, and David Udovich.

nation's shining star when it comes to cuttingedge renewable energy," said David Udovich, executive director of secondary initiatives whose offices are at the site.

His remarks were made during an April 7 meeting to discuss plans for this and other proposals for Cooper, which began sharing space this year with the Mission Verde Center, a multipurpose education, training, service and research facility exemplifying green technologies.

Funding for the solar panels and other related projects will come from a \$1 million energy efficiency and conservation block grant from the city of San Antonio and \$430,000 from the State Energy Conservation Office, while other sources also will be sought.

When installed, the panels will provide 48 kilowatts of solar generation capacity. Installation will include both roof and ground level locations, with the latter serving as a demonstration site to provide educational opportunities.

Not only the green thing to do, solar power also will save SAISD in utility costs, which in turn will qualify the District for rebates up to \$30,000 from CPS Energy, said Kamal ElHabr, associate superintendent of construction management.

Plans discussed for the savings included further improvements - especially to Cooper's more than 50-year-old main building - such as lighting retrofits and other products such as advanced electric and water meters, and renewable generation sources. Pending additional funding, new energy-efficient windows would be installed.

Implementation and design are being developed by partner Texas Engineering Experiment Station's Texas Center for Applied Technology, and University of Texas at San Antonio students have drawn blueprints to make incorporating the solar panels into the campus aesthetically pleasing as well as practical.

Quality of budgeting continues to earn accolades for SAISD

Superior online financial transparency has garnered the District a gold award - the Texas Comptroller Leadership Circle's highest rating.

The SAISD's Department of Finance qualified by scoring a perfect 15 points in areas including:

- making financial records open to the public
- providing clear, consistent pictures of spending
- sharing information in a user-friendly format "It is critical for the District and our taxpayers that we be as transparent as possible with regard to how our tax money is spent," said Steve Bassett, associate superintendent

"We want the public to know that we take our duty to be good stewards of these funds very seriously. This kind of recognition is yet another way to communicate to the public our fiduciary responsibility."

The Comptroller of Public Accounts initiated the Leadership Circle program

in December to recognize governments and entities such as SAISD for displaying a high level of online financial transparency.



Comptroller Leadership Circle Member

The gold award is the second honor the District recently has received for its quality of budgeting. Earlier this year SAISD became a four-time recipient of the Meritorious Budget Award from the Association of School Business Officials International.

The award-winning budget can be viewed at:

www.saisd.net/admin/budget/2009-10_ Distict_Budget.pdf.

NEA grant to share the gift of reading with Crockett ES students

Young bibliophiles at a West Side elementary will soon have even more reading materials to enjoy in the school library.

As one of only 43 recipients of the National Education Association Foundation's Books Across America Award, Crockett ES librarian Tracy Mapus has an extra \$1,000 to stock the shelves.

The award is contingent upon an application process open to all public schools serving predominantly economically-disadvantaged students.

"My grant was written to help improve our bilingual book collection," Mapus said.

"With it, we will be able to purchase approximately 70 new bilingual books for our library, which can service all 847 of our students, as they are published in both English and Spanish."

Funding for Books Across America is provided in collaboration with the NEA and the Pearson Charitable Foundation.





"Si Se Puede" is the type of bilingual book librarian Tracy Mapus plans to purchase.

The other champions of March Madness!



Longfellow MS student Brandon Castillo accepts congratulations from (I to r) event local project manager Kari Chapman, principal Elizabeth Solis, and teacher Monica Brooks.

You didn't have to be a college athlete adept at dribbling and dunking basketballs to capture a title at this year's NCAA championships.

Instead, a winning way with words was enough to make 7th-graders Brandon Castillo of Longfellow MS and Whittier Academy's Brianna Salinas champions as two of only four area students to earn a laptop computer as victors in the 2010 NCAA Middle School Madness essay competition.

The contest theme required 6th through 8th-graders to answer the question: "What is the Power of a Dream – of setting goals and working to achieve those goals?"



Congratulating Whittier Academy's Brianna Salinas (in blue) are (I to r) coach Belinda Castañeda, teacher Kim Lerma and assistant principal Mary Alvarez-Garcia.



Good as gold

Celebrating their championship at the Showtime National Dance Team contest are the Edison HS Golden Girls. Besides taking the top spot, the dancers also ranked first in hip hop, prop and pom, and second in jazz. In addition to the trophy, they will receive national jackets representing their status as the highest scoring dancers at the contest competing in the extra small team category. Director of the multi-awarding troupe (third from right, top row) is Kimberly Cook.



Masters of mariachi

Despite their youth, Los Tigres from Austin Academy already are among an elite group of Lone Star State musicians. Led by director Miguel Guzmán (not pictured), the troubadours recently placed second at FESTIBA'S 2010 Mariachi Competition at the University of Texas - Pan American in Edinburg, considered the toughest in Texas. This contest is part of the Festival of International Books and Arts celebration promoting an appreciation of the arts, humanities and cultural awareness, as well as reading and early literacy.

For Your Benefit

'Tis the season to be on guard for springtime allergies



Looking forward to outdoor fun now that the weather is warmer and days are longer, but not to the sniffling, sneezing, and itchy, watery eyes

common to this time

of year?

You're not alone. More than 50 million Americans annually suffer from springtime allergic reactions.

In this issue of For Your Benefit we provide tips on recognizing some of the signs and common causes of allergies, and offer some treatment options so that you needn't miss work or leisure time!

How allergies attack

Also referred to as allergic rhinitis, allergies are caused by exposure to airborne allergens. These can enter the body through:

- inhalation or ingestion
- contact with the skin
- injection, such as medically or an

insect sting

Symptoms

Unlike colds that are contagious, may include a high temperature, thick, nasal discharge, and typically last a week, allergies can occur year-round.

Symptoms, according to the Cornell Medical Center and the National Institute of Allergies & Infectious Diseases, are:

- sneezing repeatedly
- thin, watery, clear nasal discharge
- recurring eye and throat irritation
- dark under-eye circles or red-rimmed, swollen eyes

First line of defense

Before heading to the pharmacy, try eliminating allergens at their source with these tips from the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology.

- Use air conditioning to maintain cleaner, drier air.
- Stay indoors as much as possible during: the peak pollen times of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; when humidity is high; and on extremely windy days.

- Keep car windows closed while traveling.
- After time outside, shower to remove any pollen from your skin or hair.

Still suffering?

If ridding your environment of allergens wasn't enough to keep them completely at bay, you might want to add over-the-counter and prescription medications to your arsenal.

Ask your physician about the following:

- Oral and nasal antihistamines, for itchy eyes and nose, runny nose and sneezing
- Nasal-inhaled corticosteroids for all nasal related symptoms
- Decongestants to narrow nose blood vessels which directly reduces mucus
- Leukotriene modifiers to block the triggers that cause itching, sneezing and even congestion

Over-the-counter medications and/or nasal sprays should not be used for more than a few days at a time, so please consult your physician if symptoms persist.

For more information visit:

www.Humana.com.



Ready for Redding

Director of Human Resources Gabril Muñoz shows the Jefferson HS new head football coach where to place his signature while principal A. Joanne Cockrell and Athletics Executive Director Gil Garza witness the signing ceremony. Doyle Redding most recently served as the Mustang's offensive coordinator/head track coach and as a teacher.



Primo percussionists

Jefferson HS drumline members (above) proudly display the banner they received by virtue of their first place tie in the Scholastic Marching AA category, while the Highlands HS Winter Percussion group (below) shows off some of the moves that earned them second competing in Scholastic Marching A. Both schools received these honors at the recent Texas Educational Colorguard Association state championship





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in the Spotlight



VIP counselor

Honored by Texas A&M University with the Very Important Counselor Lifetime Achievement Award is Jeffrey Blum of Brackenridge HS. Thanks to his dedication, the near 40-year veteran counselor has assisted countless students in continuing their educations beyond high school. Typically, around 85 percent of Brackenridge graduates indicate intentions of attending two- to four-year colleges and universities



A tea party in wonderland

As the White Rabbit checks his pocket watch to make sure he won't be late for this very important date, YWLA 6th-graders (I to r) Dyanalexis Martinez, Jocelyn Castillo and Carmel Dudley partake of their own version of the Mad Hatter's tea party. The festivity concluded an intensive pre-AP study of Lewis Carroll's classic "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," and also provided students at the city's only all-girls public school a fun opportunity to practice their etiquette.

insider is produced by the Communications Department.

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