

The Briones Banner



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Welcome Back!

Come and celebrate Spring
at the Briones Spring Fling
dance party, Sat., April 16



Calendar

Apr 11	PTA Meeting at 8:30am
Apr 16	Briones Spring Fling
Apr 22	Local Holiday – No School
Apr 25	STAR testing begins

Principal's Message

By the time this issue of The Banner reaches your home, only 42 days will remain in the 2004-05 school year. During those nine-plus weeks, we'll hold STAR testing (April 25-May 16), Young Author's Day (May 18), Open House (May 25), and numerous other activities and gatherings too numerous to mention here. It could be our busiest time of year, even busier than the fall.

Beginning to bubble behind the scenes are preparations for the 2005-06 school year. By now, you should have received, completed, and returned to school a bright orange survey indicating your family's intentions for the coming school year. Specifically, we need to know whether you and your children will be returning to Juana Briones for the coming year. This information is very helpful to our planning.

We are also in the process of preparing another State-mandated Safe School Plan for 2005-06. If you haven't returned the brief survey -- a green

one this time -- that we sent home with your child earlier this week, please do so as soon as possible. Parent perspectives are critical to our plans for a safe physical and social environment and a positive school culture.

Having one foot in the current school year and the other in next year is a way of life for Palo Alto principals during the spring. In preparation for 2005-06, principals have been pouring over files in the District's Human Resources Department, searching for talented new and veteran teachers to replace individuals who are retiring, resigning, or taking leave. In recent years, we have also had to factor growing enrollment across the district.

We will have our first glimpse of many new candidates at our Job Fair on Saturday, April 16. Subsequent to the fair, principals will gather to interview and observe promising prospects in a mad rush to beat other

school districts to signing candidates to a contract. We want to hire only the brightest and best, and that means we have to move quickly.

Spring is a time of wonder and worry over our financial situation. Budget news out of Sacramento is grim and contentious these days. Local property tax revenues seem to be flat in the face of our burgeoning enrollment, leading to significant financial uncertainty. We won't secure a clear view of the future until we know the outcome of Measure A, the parcel tax campaign.

Fortunately, before spring break, we received terrific news from the Palo Alto Partners In Education (PIE) indicating that it has raised more than \$1.7 million to support PAUSD schools. Generous contributions from parents like you helped PIE raise enough money to donate \$250 per student to every elementary school for 2005-06. Presently, our enrollment is 310 students, and a donation of \$250 per student would amount to \$77,500! With those funds, we can continue our science program, SPECTRA art classes, and classroom aide support. It's the second consecutive year that PIE (previously known as the All Schools Fund) has been able to rally the community to support schools.

Knowing the scope of community support and that a piece of important funding is in place is tremendously reassuring and energizing. It makes all the tasks of spring easier to do. On behalf of the staff – and especially our students – I thank everyone in the community and at PIE for their hard work and generosity.

—Gary Dalton

PTA President's Message

West Bay Opera Assembly

Just before the break, West Bay Opera put on a performance of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, shortened, of course, for our students. Several students were given the chance to perform with the cast or to sing in the chorus. Our students did a fabulous job both as performers and as an audience. The opera company



complimented our school on how attentive the students were during the performances. Even the Kindergarteners were spellbound. Make sure that you thank teachers, Laurie Levy and Kristine Berg, for rehearsing the chorus during their lunch times. This would not have been the great experience that it was for our kids, without their support. This is the last of our assemblies that have been paid for by our PTA. You should feel proud of the wonderfully enriching assemblies we have been able to bring to our children, because of your support.

PTA Meeting

We hope to see many of you come out for our next PTA meeting to be held on **Monday, April 11th at 8:30 am**. We would like to have a good turnout for our guest speaker, Mandy Lowell of the Board of Education. Mandy will be speaking about the Parcel Tax, now called Measure A, that will be on the ballot in the June 7th election. At this meeting, we will also be voting to support Measure A and voting to approve the slate of officers for next year's PTA. Please put this

date on your calendar. Babysitting and treats will be provided.

Upcoming Speaker

On Monday, April 18th from 6:45-8:15pm, we will have a parent education night in the Juana Briones MP Room. Our speaker, Ami Chen Naim is a Lead Trainer in Health Realization Psychology for Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospitals Health Realization Services Division where she teaches classes for a wide range of audiences and leads the community practitioner internship program. She has worked extensively with youth and educators, parents and professionals, and is author of two books, including "How to Be Happy No Matter What," a self-help book for youth due from Lone Pine Publishing later this year. She has written numerous articles on depression, multi-cultural spirituality and relationships—which have appeared in Metro and the San Francisco Chronicle Sunday Magazine, among other publications. You can find her bio, publications and more information at www.healthrealization.com. We are very excited to have Ami speak at our school and share her valuable insights. Please mark this date in your calendar today. Babysitting and dessert will be provided.

Simply the Best Briones Dance Party

Saturday, April 16th is the date you need to get a babysitter for, because it is time for our Second Annual Briones Dance Party! Last year's party was a huge success. We danced to the fabulous music donated and performed by **The Walter Hayes Wildcats** and wine and dined on food brought by everyone. Look for the flyer in this Banner for ticket information.

Calendar Project

Next year, the Briones PTA is planning on putting together a calendar full of Briones dates of PTA



meetings and events, as well as having lots of pictures of Briones students and families having fun. We are trying to put together a prototype **this month** and this is where we need your help. Anyone, who has taken photos (digital preferable, but not necessary), of kids at the different Briones events, such as, the Harvest Festival, Ice Cream Social or the Halloween parade, please contact Avivit Steinhart at avivit@digilabs.net. The sooner you send your photos to Avivit, the sooner she can make up a prototype. I believe that this calendar will be a very useful tool for next year.

Please mark your calendar with the upcoming events mentioned above. That's all for now!

—Suzanne McKenna

Juana Briones PTA Co-President

FYI

BRIONES ANNOUNCEMENTS

Adopt an Apricot Tree at Briones Park

There are still apricot trees that are waiting for kids and families to care for them from now until October.

Canopy, the organization sponsoring this project, has eight trees left. They are now waiting in pots to be adopted at the edge of Briones Park (corner closest to the OH entrance). Look by the ivy fence and take any tree with its pot you'd like. The agreement is: You need to email Canopy with your family name, kids' name(s), email where you can be reached during the summer, phone and address. Canopy will get in touch with you to give you care instructions and check in with you during the summer.

In the fall, they will schedule a planting day at Briones Park, and caretakers will get their names on a marker planted with their trees. Email: info@canopy.org. Questions, call Jana at Canopy 964-6110.

From the Office

If you haven't returned the orange form that indicates if your child will be returning to Briones next year please do so. Extra copies are available in the office if you need one.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Bringing Up Bicyclists - April 7, 12, 20 Or May 4

Learn to teach your children how to be responsible, legal & predictable bicyclists. The courses cover differences between children & adults when cycling, basic requirements for parents to help their children ride safely, mistakes children make when bicycling, and basic skills that need to be taught. Parents learn how to select and fit bicycles & helmets. For parents with children up to 10 years old. Choose Thu., April 7, Tue., April 12, Wed., April 20, or Wed., May 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Co-sponsored by PTA Council. Info: see p.9 of <http://www.paenjoy.org/documents/AdultsSeniors.pdf>.

Upcoming Great Gatherings events:

April 8
Cosmos and Karaoke (Ladies)
April 16
Tour de Stanford, bike ride
April 17
Mah-jongg Party
April 30
Poolside Wine Tasting

Save The Date! Let's *Really* Talk About College - April 13

A Panel Discussion for parents of elementary, middle and high school students. Interested middle- & high-school students welcome! Wed Apr 13, Theatre, Paly, 7:00-9:00 PM Sponsored by the SHARE Committee. Info: Louise Singleton, louisecs@aol.com.

Health Choices From a Woman's Perspective - April 16

Keynote speech (Dr. Fred Luskin), "The Healing Power & Medical Benefits of Forgiveness," followed by lunch and your choice of workshops. Sat Apr 16, at Paly, 50 Embarcadero Rd, 9:30 to 4:00. \$25 (incl continental breakfast & box lunch). Flyer, full details, & registration info: http://www.paadultschool.org/pdf/health_choices.pdf.

Palo Alto Children's Theatre Outreach - April 14-16.

The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe at Walter Hays, 1525 Middlefield Road. April 14 at 7:30, April 15 at 4:30 and 7:30 and April 16 at 2:30. Tickets available through the Children's Theatre Box Office Tues-Sat 1:30 to 6:00. \$3.00 children \$6.00 adults.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**How Do *You* Make Good
Communitys Better? - April 9**

Come explore avenues for community involvement! State Sen. Joe Simitian on "How Local Government Really Works." A great panel, including Gunn PTSA President Kate Hill, on ways we can be involved & effective in local democratic processes. Breakout sessions for more detail. Saturday, April 9, Garden Court Hotel, 520 Cowper, 8:30-noon. http://www.paloaltopta.org/news/PAGE_town_hall_meeting.pdf RSVP (encouraged & appreciated) and info: Julie Jerome, juliejjj@aol.com, 493-8645.

**4th Annual Community Day at
Stanford - April 10**

All-day open house featuring music, arts, athletic events, science exhibits, faculty lectures, & a health fair.



Community Day is designed to promote partnerships & increase understanding among Stanford and its neighbors. An estimated 6500 people attended the first Community Day, & 10,000 came last year. Sun, Apr 10, 10 to 4. All events FREE & open to the public. Most are near main quad at end of Palm Drive. Info: 724-2933, communityday@stanford.edu, <http://communityday.stanford.edu>.

Ask-A-Principal Hotline

April 17-19

An opportunity to speak confidentially with school principals & school psychologists about your children's education. The hotline, a program of the National



Ass'n of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), is designed to encourage communication between home & school.

To ask a question, call 800-944-1601, toll-free,

- Sun Apr 17, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (California time),
- Mon Apr 18, 4 a.m. to 4 p.m., or
- Tue Apr 19, 4 a.m. to 10 a.m.,

or e-mail your question through NAESP's web site: <http://www.naesp.org>, starting a day earlier (April 16). Translators available for questions in Spanish.

Items included in the Briones Banner are presented as a community service. The Briones PTA and PAUSD do not necessarily endorse any of the programs mentioned here. For more information about any item, please check to see if complete flyers are available in the school office or are posted on the bulletin board just outside the school office

**Two Talks By Alfie Kohn -
April 18 & 19**

Info, articles, etc.: <http://www.alfiekohn.org>.

**The (Progressive) Schools Our
Children Deserve**

Monday, April 18, Hewlett SEQ Teaching Ctr, Rm 200, 370 Serra Mall, Stanford, 7-9 p.m.

**Unconditional Parenting:
Beyond Bribes and Threats**

Tuesday, April 19, Kresge Auditorium, 555 Nathan Abbott Way, Stanford, 7-9 p.m. TICKETS, each talk, \$10, expected to sell out. Flyer, ticket info: <http://www.peninsulaschool.org/alfie.pdf>. Info: 325-1584 (Peninsula School), Lucille or Bette.

Ethics Of Aging - April 21

Discussion with Stanford faculty Ronald Barrett, Clifford Barnett, Barbara Koenig & Carol Winograd. Topics include: how treatment options are evaluated by doctors & family members, socioeconomic effects of increased longevity, & how old age is being redefined as people live longer. Free, open to the public. Sponsor: Program in Ethics in Society & Center on Ethics, <http://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu>. Thu., April 21, Lucie Stern Center, 1305 Middlefield, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Info: Joan Berry, joanieb@stanford.edu.