



# The Penguin Post

October/November 2008

## 2008 RENOVATIONS AND PLANS

It's beginning to look like an exciting school year!

Definitely the grand old building got quite a makeover this summer! Beautiful and historic, our Kirby Hall is not just a school; for many of us, it's our child's second home.

However, "historic" usually means extensive maintenance. Plumbing and wiring do not age well, nor do carpets or rugs that show the signs of kids walking, running, trudging on them. Doors have seen countless postings, notices and reminders pinned, tapped or "gasp!" stapled on them. Our Kirby Hall is a *hard working* grand old building. She needed our help. She was due for some updating. Previous renovations tended to focus on the first floor and the basement classroom & work areas. Last year, the decision was made to focus on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. The renovations needed to be sensitive to the historic nature of the building and the limited budget.

When Jeanette Timco and her partners in crime decided to renovate the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors, their ambitions were to change lights fixtures, install new bathroom fixtures and paint the hallways. It would take just a little over one month of full time work with several parents and volunteers. But as soon as they started, they realize these were cosmetics changes. How can you install new bathroom fixtures, when the plumbing still runs on old original pipes that need changing? Can you put in new lights without addressing the new electrical requirements? And with the spectacular new paint on the hallway, doesn't that highlight the carpets or doors that shows its age?

What started as one month ended up taking the whole summer. Family trips were sacrificed; it was 6 days a week, from 8am – 7pm of hard work. Over 20 families helped, both parents and their children. The modest original budget became inadequate. The difference? They became personal expenses that these families, as well as Mrs. Rase, took on because everyone involved started to see *how much better* our grand old building was looking and ultimately, becoming.

It was Antonio Barjau and his friends who dug-up the playground to lay new pipes, who redid the interior plumbing and electrical systems. It was Mike Bui, Bill Burak and Rob Mazzetti who restored the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor doors, spending 3 days on each door, sanding and varnishing to remove traces of decades of use. It was Linda Lessner, who while redoing the "Penguin" bathroom, couldn't see the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade bathroom, nor the playground bathroom, neglected. It was Jeanette Timco, Michelle Orsborn, and Viola Perez. Perhaps it was ambitious to tackle such a renovation, especially when the budget was for a smaller project, but Jeanette, Michelle and Viola worked everyday to help make it happen. Overall, the cost totaled close to \$20,000.

In a few years, the renovations may be all but forgotten. But the children and the teachers, now and tomorrow, have a new home where they feel happy and comfortable to be in, for 8 hours a day, 8 months a

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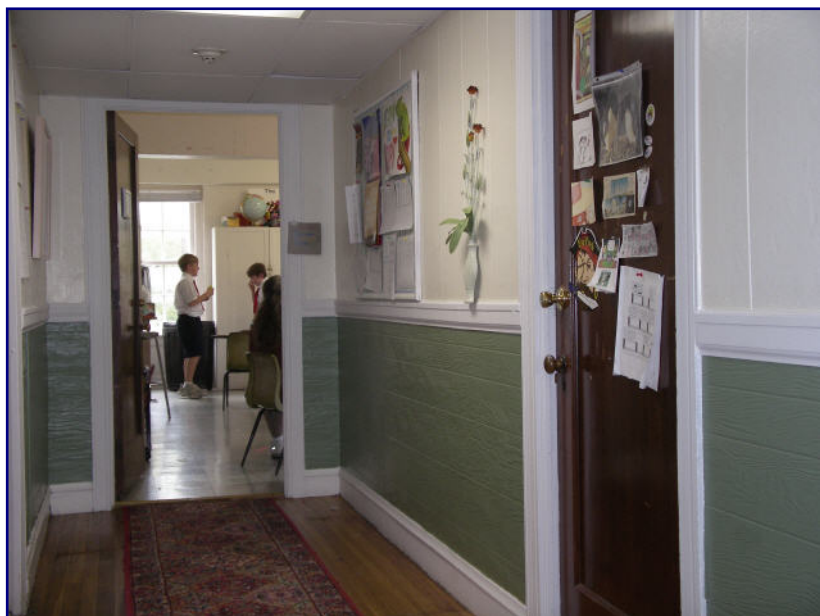


Antonio Barjau

year. Perhaps names like Richards, Pontin, Getchell, and Toller, or Sweetman, Valdez, Fisher, and Jones will be unknown to them. But we and future KHS families are grateful to these folks for their generosity.

*But the plans don't end there!*

There are plans to update each classroom, with one classroom a month. This will help teachers use their spaces more effectively and address the needs of the students. There are also plans to make the school more modern, with a new school computer server and new laptops for each teacher.



If you feel inspired to help, you will be happy to know that there are two easy ways you can do so. You can make a tax-deductible contribution to the school to help offset the cost of the renovations. And, each month, as a classroom is updated and, if this classroom is your child's, you can get involved there. Your involvement is truly crucial. The first room will be Mr. Dailey's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade room. C'mon 2<sup>nd</sup> grade families... The knowledge that you can make a difference is infectious.

When Jeanette was asked what she will do next summer, she gave her unmistakable laugh.

We'll keep you posted...

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## CLASSROOM NEWS

### Primer

Mrs. Campbell: KHS's youngest students are having lots of fun in Primer! The new themes for October are Colors and Halloween. The first class field trip will be to the Elgin Christmas Tree Farm for the annual Pumpkin Festival.

### Kindergarten

Mrs. Hawn: Our class is busy learning about different parts of a story and all the people it takes to write a story. Mrs. Stokes taught the class a great song to help us remember the author and illustrator's jobs! We even published our own classroom book!

Mrs. Robertson: Kindergarten has been learning about plants in Science. When asked about their favorite aspects of the unit, students remarked they enjoyed making and eating applesauce, comparing beans that have been soaked in water overnight to dry beans, looking inside the beans and putting lima beans in a cup with wet paper towels to see what happens as the beans start to grow!

### 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

Mrs. Parks: We are off to a great start down in first grade. In science, we are studying the amazing body systems! We are looking at real bones, putting together a heart model, playing games to show how the bones fit together and how the blood travels through the body.

We worked on our class T-Rex for a contest at the Botanical Gardens! We plan to visit the DinoLand exhibit on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November for a field trip, and it will be so exciting to see our creation up for all of Austin to see!

Other than these special events, we are hard at work every day on math, reading, writing, spelling and being fabulous Kirby Hall students!

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Mr. Dailey & Mrs. Weise: Second grade has been busy learning about water, water, water. We are discussing the importance of water in the world's everyday life, how the water cycle works, and most importantly, how to conserve water!

In Social Studies we have just finished our study of Ancient India. Students became very involved, bringing in rupees, powder for bindhis and even a miniature toy rickshaw! We are now onto Ancient China. Here we come, Great Wall!

Finally, we just finished reading *Mr. Popper's Penguins* and completed our intensive study of "the main idea". We enjoyed our biography presentations. We have heard from the likes of Neil Armstrong, Susan B. Anthony and even two Helen Kellers. GO 2ND GRADE!

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

Mrs. Smith: In Third Grade, we are off and running to a great start for the school year! We are enjoying learning about amphibians and their aquatic environment, with our classroom tadpole tank. Third Grade students have also started reading the first of four novels, *Pippi Longstocking*, and are having fun reading about Pippi's adventures!

## 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Mr. La Londe: Fourth graders are currently studying the Middle Ages in History, reading *King Arthur* in English and focusing on Europe in Geography. An alumnus of Kirby Hall, Mr. La Londe returns to KHS after teaching English in Bahrain and ESL in Thailand. Mr. La Londe is very pleased that hard wood floors have replaced the red carpet in the hallways upstairs! Welcome back to KHS!

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Ms. Arnell: 5th graders are reading Shakespeare, in the form of short stories penned by Charles and Mary Lamb in 1807. We've been having fun with comedies (*Much Ado about Nothing*, *Twelfth Night*) and are about to look at the darker side with tragedies (*King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*).

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Mrs. Darr: Sixth graders are acclimating to being official middle schoolers and entering a new world of "coolness". This vivacious lot is large group of 17, with the girls outnumbering the boys. In Science, the focus is on Physical Science. Students will study the principles of matter, energy and force and other aspects of Physics.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

Mr. Rumrich: 7<sup>th</sup> graders have just finished a unit on archaeology to see how people in the past lived. We enjoyed our overnight trip to Goliad where we learned about life in a Spanish Mission and took a tour of a fully restored Presidio. In late October, students will start reports on key figures of the Texas Revolution.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Ms. Fickling: As part of their fundraising efforts, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade is currently "selling" parking spaces at KHS during the UT Football home games. There is a suggested donation of \$5-10, and all proceeds go to the end of the year class trip. Please spread the word to friends and family and help out these hardworking students! The 8<sup>th</sup> grade is also in charge of this year's Haunted House. It is sure to be ghoulishly fun!

# STUDENT'S BIRTHDAY

## HAPPY OCT BIRTHDAY!

### Primer

Sean 29-Oct  
Tyler 17-Oct  
Taryn 24-Oct

### Kindergarten

Joshua 30-Oct  
Madeleine Emily 04-Oct

### 1st Grade

Jorn 26-Oct  
Ian 15-Oct  
Selin 13-Oct  
Vaughan 03-Oct  
Gandharvi 10-Oct

### 2nd Grade

Jacob 24-Oct  
Ishan 10-Oct  
Carolina 26-Oct  
Cordell 28-Oct  
Prakrith 28-Oct  
Abigail 17-Oct  
Carolyn 25-Oct

### 3rd Grade

Charles 04-Oct  
Lukas 26-Oct

### 4th Grade

Ryan 09-Oct  
Adam 29-Oct

### 5th Grade

Maya 24-Oct

### 10th Grade

Ryan 03-Oct  
Harrison 14-Oct

## HAPPY NOV BIRTHDAY!

### Kindergarten

Dennis 22-Nov  
Joseph 02-Nov  
Kyle 26-Nov

### 1st Grade

Tarun 25-Nov  
Ibrahim 15-Nov  
Alexander 20-Nov

### 2nd Grade

Somil 01-Nov  
Sophia 8-Nov

### 3rd Grade

Owen 23-Nov

### 4th Grade

Sonali 18-Nov

### 5th Grade

Isabeau 13-Nov  
Gisela 20-Nov

### 6th Grade

Victor 25-Nov

### 10th Grade

Chelsea 03-Nov



## Upper School

**Ms. Arnell:** In British Literature, the freshmen and sophomores are getting started with *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare. We're taking a performance approach to studying the play, and so the students are working on understanding the language and visualizing the scenes.

## Library

**Ms. Stokes:** In Library class, Kirby Hall third and fourth graders are busy learning good research skills. Everyone is enjoying our three new sets of encyclopedias purchased with proceeds from last year's book fair, which we call "Ms. Stokes' Pet Tigers" because of the tigers on the covers. Fifth grade is working to decode the six special bricks written in code near the front porch, which were a gift from the Wenzel family. They are using their excellent research skills to learn about codes and ciphers so they can find out what the mystery bricks say!

## Physical Education

**Coach Newkirk:** Coach Newkirk would like to send a special note of thanks to KHS parent Katie Stephens, who recently taught a "kicking and striking" workshop to our P.E. students. Mrs. Stephens is a level 3 black belt in Taekwondo. It was, by all accounts, an awesome day – AAIYAHH!

## Spanish

**Sra. Bonikowski:** In Spanish class for Primer-4<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated Mexican Independence Day (el dieciseis de septiembre) last month. Now we've returned to studying Spanish vocabulary and grammar (masculine, feminine, singular, and plural inflections for all of the components of the noun phrase). We'll keep our nose to the grammar grindstone until the end of the month, when we'll take time out to celebrate Halloween and the traditional Hispanic Day of the Dead (el día de los muertos).

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## A Day in the Life of....Jeane W. (KHS Junior)

Jeane is a Kirby Hall junior. She is a thoughtful young lady with a passion for mathematics. She started at KHS as a Kindergartner. Here's her schedule in her own words...

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Here follows a typical day in the life of a completely *atypical* Kirby Hall junior-- my schedule is very strange and a little confusing.

**8 am** I have AP Composition with Ms. Arnell, then it's on to...

**9 to 1 pm** Quiet work time, during which I take a break to eat lunch at different times on different days; then...

**1:30 pm** I go to Economics/AP and Government with Mr. Thomas. After which follows...

**2:30 pm** A brief study hall that lasts either a half-hour or an hour depending on which day it is.

**3 or 3:30 pm** I walk with my friend Marguerite to UT, which takes about fifteen minutes, though we like to leave 15 minutes for error and incidentals.

**3:30 or 4 pm** Math class begins. Our class is called Sequences, Series, and Multivariable Calculus, or M408D. At UT, the longer sessions are lectures given by Dr. Helm, and the shorter sessions are our section meetings with our TA, Jesse. The class only takes place M-Th, which is nice because we like to get Fridays off. :-)

**5 pm** After class I wave goodbye to Marguerite and speed-walk to FR506, or first-year French, which is on the complete opposite side of campus. I usually arrive a few minutes late despite my best intentions, but my teacher, Ms. Goudet, does not mind too much. I have taken the AP Spanish exam, so this is a great opportunity for me to try another foreign language. French, too, doesn't meet on Fridays, which means that I am able to leave school at 2:30pm on Fridays.

In addition to the classes I take at Kirby Hall and UT, I am also taking Physics long-distance through Brigham-Young University, and soon, I'll begin my AP Chemistry class taken through Johns' Hopkins CTY program. I like distance education classes because they give me an opportunity to take classes not offered by Kirby Hall or UT, and they allow me to work at my own pace.

# AN INTERVIEW WITH JOE RUMRICH

Interview by Salar C. and Josh S. (7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Many KHS students and parents are warmly greeted each morning by Mr. Joe Rumrich, History teacher and newly appointed Administrator at KHS. Have you also noticed he's worn a different tie everyday? That's because he owns over 60 of them! Here are a few more fun facts about Mr. Rumrich.

A few of Mr. Rumrich's favorite things:

- Playing softball 2 nights a week and coaching his nephew's little league team
- Rocky Road ice cream
- His big, fat 15lbs. orange Siamese cat, Yorick
- Reading historical biographies
- Traveling: Mr. Rumrich has traveled extensively, including trips to France, Germany, Austria and Hungary (where he researched his family history and met his Great Aunt Maria)
- The color blue
- Chicken Cordon Bleu, Champs Elysees Potatoes and Hungarian Cucumber Salad (yum!)
- Milto's Restaurant
- The New York Yankees



Before becoming a teacher, Mr. Rumrich worked in restaurant management for 10 years (he earned his degree at Purdue University). He lived in Atlanta, Georgia and Northern Kentucky before taking up residence in Austin, where he has lived for the past 20 years. He earned his teaching certificate at the University of Texas and is a 17 year veteran of teaching.

## JOE'S HUNGARIAN CUCUMBER SALAD

2 - 3	Seedless English cucumbers
1/2	Large yellow onion
4 tbsp.	Salt
1/2 - 1 c.	White vinegar
4 tbsp.	Sour cream*
1	Chopped tomato
	Chopped parsley (to taste)
	Ice water (enough to soak cucumber mix)
	Hungarian paprika

1. Peel cucumbers and onion
2. Slice cucumber and onion very, very thin
3. Add salt to ice water
4. Soak cucumber mix for 6 hrs. Stir occasionally
5. After 6 hours, squeeze out all water from the cucumber mix
6. In another bowl, add the cucumber mix with vinegar, sour cream and chopped parsley. Mixed well and garnished with chopped tomato and a dash of paprika

\* you can substitute a rich sour cream and onion dip for the sour cream

# Volunteering and Fundraising

**School Server and Teacher Laptop:** Help modernize Kirby Hall! We are working with Jamie Graham, whose daughter is in the second grade, to install a computer server and provide each teacher with a laptop. This will give teachers and administrators a reliable way to access their RenWeb accounts, update their lessons and check their emails while at school.

Here are ways you can help:

Work at the University of Texas Concession Stand at the DKR-Texas Memorial Stadium. Volunteer to serve food and drinks at a UT concession stand, and have fun getting to know other Kirby Hall families and friends. If you're a die-hard UT fan, it will be a chance to attend all the UT home games and have fun! Kirby Hall earns about \$400 - \$500 per game. The schedule for the games is posted in the newsletter calendar. For more information, please contact Jeanette Timco ([jltimco@gmail.com](mailto:jltimco@gmail.com) 512-789-7896) or Michelle Orsborn ([panyann@aol.com](mailto:panyann@aol.com) 512-785-5950).

Entertainment Pass Books: Each book is \$20. Kirby Hall earns \$10 per book. The books are full of useful coupons. They'll pay for themselves many times over. The books are available through the end of October at the Penguin Pit Stop. Hurry and place your order today!

Make cash donation: Please use the donation ticket at the bottom of the newsletter calendar to make your tax-deductible gift.

**Classroom Renovation:** Each month a classroom will be updated. This will help the teacher use their space more effectively and address the needs of the students. The classroom teacher will provide a "wish list" of things they would like to change. It could be as simple as new paint. However, it may be as involved as structural changes. As you all know, Kirby Hall was originally a dormitory. While it has served us well as a school, we can "redefine" its original purpose, to suit the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century school. Mr. Dailey's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom is the first one to be updated. This year, he has a class of 15, and he is in desperate need of more storage space. He would be over the moon if we can replace the wooden ladder (to the loft) with a circular metal one! Here are ways you can help:

Parents volunteer to work during the classroom update. Parents' participation is vital to this program's success and will reduce the cost of the renovations. The teachers will be there to work on their classrooms as well. So for all the weekend-warriors out there, this will be the time for you to shine. All the work will be done on the weekends. See your classroom teacher or Jeanette Timco ([jltimco@gmail.com](mailto:jltimco@gmail.com)) for more details.

Make a donation: For things that muscle cannot accomplish, your tax deductible donations can. Donations can be in the form of things, such as paint, construction supplies or furniture, that the classroom needs, or it can be cash which, when pooled together, can buy a more expensive item. Please use the donation ticket at the bottom of the newsletter calendar to make your tax-deductible gift.

**Ms. Symthe's Brick Memorial :** The students of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade class want to raise money for four engraved bricks, in memory of their Science teacher, Ms. Victoria Smythe. The engraved bricks will be placed in the walkway in front of the school. They are asking all families, students and teachers of Kirby Hall to make a small contribution to fund this memorial. The cost is \$610. There will be a box in the main office for all contributions, until October 30th.



**Teachers' Appreciation:** All profits from the Penguin Pit Stop go to our wonderful teachers in the form of birthday presents, holiday gifts, teacher wish list items, and the annual Teacher Appreciation Luncheon. Birthday Grams from the Penguin Pit Stop are a wonderful way to send a special wish to your child on his/her special day.

**For October** - Send your wonderful, hard-working child a Halloween Goblin Gram (\$3.00) or a Halloween Webkinz Goblin Gram (\$16.00).

### **Earn Cash for Kirby Hall While You Shop At:**

**Target:** Do you shop at Target? Here is a simple way you can help, and it doesn't involve getting another credit card. Apply for the Target Check Card, designate Kirby Hall as the recipient of the "Take Charge of Education" Program, and we will earn 1% from any purchase you make using the check card. To apply, please go to [https://redcard.target.com/redcard/page.jsp?contentid=rc\\_tck\\_application](https://redcard.target.com/redcard/page.jsp?contentid=rc_tck_application)



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## **Reminders:**

- **Help Us Recycle** - Please bring your handled paper grocery sacks to the school library. We'll use them to recycle paper in our classrooms.
- **Marathon Kids Registration** - Please turn in your form ASAP to Coach Chuha. See Coach Chuha if you have any questions.



**Thanks to the wonderful people who helped get this newsletter ready:**

**Helen & Sasha Roberts**

**Beverly Rase**

**Katie Stephens**

**Kelly Stokes**

**Jeanette Timco**

**All the faculty members who kindly and promptly made submissions**

**Special Thanks to the hardworking Penguin Post staff:**

**Christine Griffin**

**Phuong Varma**



Farewell Dear Teacher, Dear Friend  
Ms. Victoria Smythe  
October 7, 2008

"At dawn, the sun shines like a million moons  
And all the shadows are as bright as moonlight.  
The birds begin to sing with all their might.  
The world awakens and forgets the night.

The black-and-gray turns green-and-gold-and-blue..."

An excerpt from one of Ms. Smythe's favorite book  
The Bat Poet by Randall Jarrell



# KHS November '08

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
28	29	30	29	30	31	<b>1</b> Upper School Play
<b>2</b> Daylight Savings Ms. Tiffany Campell's Birthday	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 7th Grade Play	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 6th Grade Play	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> UT VS Baylor Fundraiser for Computers
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Veteran's Day OFF	<b>11</b> Mrs. Terry Parks' Birthday	<b>12</b> 4rd Grade Play	<b>13</b> 2nd Grade Play <B> 1st Grade Field Trip	<b>14</b> 1st Grade Play	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 2nd Grade Play <A>	<b>19</b> 4rd Grade Play	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 5th Grade Play	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Thanksgiving Holiday OFF	<b>27</b> Thanksgiving Holiday OFF UT VS Texas A&M Fundraiser for Computers	<b>28</b> Thanksgiving Holiday OFF	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

\$_____	\$_____	\$_____
<b>Computer Server</b>	<b>Classroom Renovation __ Grade</b>	<b>School Renovation</b>