

BISD Family Connects

Community Newsletter Published by BISD Communications

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ICYMI: NYT Best Selling Author Visits Bluebonnet Elementary

The [Austin American-Statesman](#) captured many smiling faces when New York Times best selling author Aaron Reynolds visited Bluebonnet Elementary School recently. Reynolds read from his book "Creepy Carrots" and talked to the students about perseverance and working hard to achieve their dreams. Great job to librarian Pattie Nix for arranging this special guest. We also appreciate reporter Colleen DeGuzman for coming to Bastrop to tell the story!

Click the link to read the full story >>

<https://amp.statesman.com/amp/8713930002?fbclid=IwAR3fRYMT-xxBA-RvLFun6lrT9l8Rh7SxWYFHB4owelr4f3z0u8KXZPtOFXl>



UPCOMING VACCINE CLINICS

Dec 1 - 4:00-7:00 pm	Mina Elementary
Dec 2 - 5:00-7:00 pm	Cedar Creek Intermediate
Dec 3 - 4:00-7:00 pm	Red Rock Elementary
Dec 7 - 4:00-7:00 pm	Lost Pines Elementary
Dec 8 - 4:00-7:00 pm	Bluebonnet Elementary
Dec 9 - 5:00-7:00 pm	Bastrop Intermediate

BISD



BISD Starts Blue Saints "Caring for Kids" Program

This year the Bastrop ISD police officers will fulfill a wish list for approximately 60 children who were identified by their school counselors as needing support this holiday season. The Caring for Kids program is similar to an angel tree program. If you would like to support the Blue Saints in fulfilling a wish list item for a child, you may contact the BISD Police Department at 512-772-7143 or email Lt. Shadwell at cshadwell@bisdtx.org.

Winter Blast Registration is Now Open!



The flyer features a winter theme with snowflakes, a blue jacket with a 'TOYS FOR TOTS' tag, a gift box, and a blue pennant with the Bastrop logo. The text is centered and includes event details and contact information.

BASTROP ISD WINTER BLAST

Drive Thru Event!
Friday, December 17
10am-12pm
Cedar Creek High School
793 Union Chapel Rd, Cedar Creek, TX 78612

Registration link now open until December 31!
<https://forms.gle/NkGQZXWkUbbfSXud8>

Bastrop ISD in partnership with various organizations will be distributing coats, toys, and books. **REGISTRATION REQUIRED, FREE event!**
For additional information about the event, please contact:
Norma Mercado @512-772-7133 / email nmercado@bisdtx.org or
It-xetl Salas at 512-772-7180 / email isalas@bisdtx.org



CCIS & The Healthy Kids Running Series

Kids from Bastrop and Cedar Creek are on the move! Seventy kids, age 2 to 14, signed up to take part in the first ever **Healthy Kids Running Series** (HKRS) held during October and November.

Organized by two Cedar Creek Intermediate School staff members, Ted Coleman and Kari Werts. Coleman serves as the National Healthy Kids Running Series Community Coordinator for Bastrop and Cedar Creek, and Werts manages event volunteers.



"I have watched my two kids grow and compete for nearly five years. When I started teaching at CCIS, I thought it would be a great chance for more of our population to be able to afford and compete in," said Coleman.



The HKRS took place on Sundays for five weekends. The distance of the race depended on the age of the runner. Runners were divided into male and female groups and then by age. Two and three year olds ran a 50 yard dash, four and five year olds ran a 75 yard dash, kindergarten and first graders ran one-fourth of a mile, second and third graders ran a half mile, fourth and fifth graders were grouped together to run one mile and sixth through eighth graders were grouped together to run one mile.

“My favorite part was seeing the growth of the runners from week to week. Some started out walking part of their race to running/jogging the entire distance,” said Werts.

“I love watching kids being active,” added Coleman. “We teach the kids that there's so much more than just winning a race. We teach them to help others and motivate others. My classroom and HKRS has a motto that I firmly believe in -- We're in this together.”

During one race, runners learned just that. A wheelchair bound participant wanted to compete. After the kids competed in their group they assisted him in the run, and pushed him to the finish line allowing him to place first.

“His family was ecstatic and it gave everyone involved a good feeling,” said Coleman.

Healthy Kids Running Series is non-profit, with all registration fees going straight back into the program. Runners can participate for all five weekends for only \$35 early bird or \$40 standard registration. The fee covers shirts, runners bibs, trophies and medals.

“We understand sports are expensive so we try to keep this at a rate for many kids to have the opportunity to participate. Myself and all volunteers are strictly that, volunteers,” explained Coleman. Coleman, Werts and all volunteers show up Sunday afternoons to prep the race, run the event and then clean up after participants and their families.

Want to learn more about HKRS? Visit the HKRS-Bastrop Cedar Creek Run sign up and information page at <https://runsignup.com/hkrsbastroptx?remMeAttempt=> or check out their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/hkrsbastroptx>. While the fall series is complete, a spring series is in the planning stages.

As the word gets out about this awesome program, Werts said, “I foresee the spring race being so much bigger! We have families coming from LaGrange and Lexington and are so excited for this opportunity.”

Volunteers make this program possible. While parents, teachers and family friends show up every Sunday to help, extra volunteers are always needed. If you're interested in assisting, contact Kari Werts at kwerts@bisdtx.org. “We want to thank the community for being awesome and so supportive!” added Coleman.



Cheesecake Santa-Berries

How adorable are these strawberry Santas? They only require a handful of ingredients, and your kids can help assemble them. It's a perfect way to get some fruit into your kids' diets during the holiday season!

Ingredients

- 16 ounce package fresh strawberries, washed
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened at room temperature*
- 4 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Mini chocolate chips, to decorate



Instructions

1. Slice the stem off the strawberry (try to cut it as "flat" as possible since the Santa-berries will use that as a base).
2. Cut the top third of the strawberry, this will be used as the "hat".
3. In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, powdered sugar, and vanilla. The mixture will be thick so it's best that the cream cheese really is at room temperature.
4. Place creamed mixture inside a zip bag (or a piping bag) and snip one corner off. Make this first cut a bit larger since you are filling the "faces" first.
5. Top strawberry base with cream mixture, top with the strawberry hats, and squeeze additional mixture on top of the hat.
6. Next, snip the opposite corner of the bag (or change your piping tip) and make a smaller opening. Use this end to decorate "Santa's" jacket buttons.
7. Use mini chocolate chips or chocolate sprinkles to decorate Santa's eyes. Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator up to 3 days.

Enjoy!

Social Emotional Learning

Self-Care Tip

The Self-Care tip for this month is 'play'. What, where, and how you play is totally up to you, but the health benefits of play include the release of endorphins and improved brain functioning. Endorphins are neurochemicals created by our own bodies and they can help reduce pain while increasing an overall sense of well-being. Play is often harder to prioritize the older a person gets, but it is no less important. It has the ability to strengthen communities, families, and relationships when we engage in acts of play with others. Here is a great [video](#) about the importance of play between caregivers and children and the connection play has to a child's ability to learn and grow into a healthy, well-adjusted adult.



What are Students Learning?

After an extended break, there is always time dedicated for teachers to reconnect with their students and to reteach or review schoolwide expectations. Once those expectations have been reviewed, students and teachers will pick back up with the same SEL units they began during November. Elementary students will continue learning about empathy, while Intermediate and Middle School students will continue learning about ways to identify and cope with difficult emotions. High School students will continue to learn about values and reflect on what their own values are. Families looking to engage their students around these topics can ask questions like:

- What are you learning during SEL time this week?
- What is one way you can demonstrate empathy to someone having a rough day?
- What are some things you value? How do your values inform your decision making?

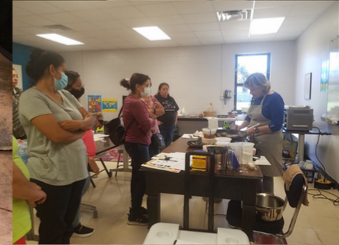
Hoopstars Deadline is December 6 - Click here to register



Thank you to Texas AgrLife Extension and BISD Bilingual Programming for partnering with BISD ACE to show our families about healthy eating during the holidays!

Families can still join us for the **Maintain no Gain** challenge where we will meet each Wednesday on Zoom at noon.

Register here:
bit.ly/BISDTH



Contact:
It-Xetl Salas
 ACE Family Engagement Specialist
isalas@bisdtx.org
 512-772-7177

Parents we want to hear from you!
 Please send your suggestions for Family events by filling out this survey:
bit.ly/ACEFES



Community Resources

Bluebonnet Trails
 Community Services

"Chat about PAT."
 January 18th, 2022

Chat about PAT

Parents as Teachers is a free parent education and support program for all parents with young children (prenatal-5 years) in Bastrop County. Click [here](#) for information on the January 18th meeting.

Health insurance. Simplified.
 Let us simplify your Marketplace insurance enrollment and bring you peace of mind, **for free.**

Open Enrollment: Nov 1 to Jan 15

- Schedule your initial "Get Ready" phone appointment now, call or visit us at:
 - 512-381-4520
 - ProsperHealthCoverage.org
- Schedule an in-person or phone enrollment appointment.
- Enjoy the peace of mind that comes with affordable health insurance.

With affordable health insurance, you can worry less about medical costs and focus on your and your family's health.

[f](#) [i](#) [t](#) [@foundationscommunities](#)

Health Insurance Open Enrollment Nov. 1 to Jan 15

Free assistance 512-381-4520

FOOD ASSISTANCE-BASTROP COUNTY

Hunger Free Communities - Bastrop Co Coalition

CONTACT INFORMATION

Many food pantries are currently closed due to a reduced model or adjusted hours of operation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To confirm service, it is highly encouraged to call the organizations at the contact numbers listed below before visiting them in person.

<p>Bastrop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humble Christian Church of Bastrop: 512-371-3380 Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry: 512-302-0033 Feed the Need (Bastrop North): 888-511-7179 x202 Feed the Need (Bastrop South): 888-511-7179 x202 First Baptist Church of Bastrop: 512-321-3384 	<p>McDade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McDade Food Pantry: 512-379-2255
<p>Palmyra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Texas Food Bank Mobile Pantry (Blodgett Church): 512-282-2111 	<p>Red Bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower Baptist Church Food Pantry: 512-303-3891
<p>Cedar Creek</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adventist Christian Church of Bastrop: 512-321-2245 (Outside City of Bastrop on the way to Cedar Creek) Central Texas Food Bank Mobile Pantry (Cedar Creek Middle School): 512-282-2111 Community of Hope Food Pantry (Friendship Bible Baptist Church): 512-321-9040 	<p>Smithville</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trinity Baptist Church Food Pantry: 512-360-9868 Trinity Baptist Church: 888-511-7179 x202 Trinity Baptist Church Food Pantry (Bastrop): 512-321-3384
<p>Elgin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elgin Community Cupboard: 512-288-4552 Elgin-Spartanville Assembly Church Food Pantry: 512-288-2208 First Baptist Church of Elgin: 512-321-3384 Trinity Baptist Church Food Pantry: 512-288-4552 (Call for appointment) 	<p>Emergency Food Assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Texas Food Bank: 888-511-7179 x202 Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry (Bastrop): 512-302-0033 Trinity Baptist Church (Red Bank): 512-360-9868 Trinity Baptist Church Food Pantry (Bastrop): 512-321-3384

Resources to Find Other Local Services

- 211.org
- FindWeb.org
- Search.org

Food Assistance-Bastrop County

<https://www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/food-assistance/get-food-now>

In The Streets Hands Up High Ministry - 9th Annual Toy Distribution is December 25 - Click here for distribution schedule

Keep Kids Reading This Holiday Season

We know the holiday break is exactly that ... a break! But it is also a great time for the family to enjoy reading together. Here are a few ways to keep your kids engaged.

1. Visit the Bastrop library at 1100 Church St.
The library's Open House is December 11 with graham cracker house decorating, music and more!
2. Collect holiday themed books
Check out this list for ideas <https://www.common Sense Media.org/lists/holiday-books-for-kids>
3. Arrange a book exchange between your child and other children
4. And of course, pack books if you're traveling

Mark Your Calendar!

December 16: Last Day of Second Nine Weeks & Third Six Weeks

December 16: Early Release

(Elementary 11:15 am/Intermediate & Middle 12:15 pm/High 12:35 pm)

December 17: Winter Blast

10 am-12 pm, Cedar Creek High School, Pre-registration Required

December 17 - 31: Staff and Student Holiday



January 3-4: Staff Development Day/Student Holiday



January 5: Students Return



Connect With Us!

 Facebook  @BastropISD

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