A tourist’s trip to England, Wales and Scotland might typically include tours of historic castles, shopping for souvenir tea towels or a round of golf at St. Andrews. But Atascocita Middle School science teacher Jill Hobbs had something far from typical in mind when she planned her summer trip to the British Isles. Hobbs wanted to see the Earth’s entire geologic history in rock specimens.

Hobbs applied for and received a grant from Fund for Teachers that allowed her to bring back 250 pounds of rock specimens, spanning the geologic time scale, from areas of the British Isles that played instrumental roles in the development of modern geology.

Fund for Teachers, a non-profit organization, enriches the personal and professional growth of teachers by providing funds for them to pursue opportunities around the globe that impact their teaching practice, the academic lives of their students and their school communities. To date, 417 teachers from 286 Houston area schools along with 1,642 teachers from around the United States have received more than $4.5 million in grants.

For Hobbs, who previously worked as a geologist for an oil company, visiting rock formations in the British Isles was a dream come true. Geology, as a science, began in the British Isles in the 1700s after two curious men, James Hutton and William Smith, began asking themselves questions about the rock formations they saw around them. Their curiosity led them to discover scientific principles that geology is based on today.

“I collected rock specimens, maps, photos and GPS data and left with a deeper appreciation of what these men accomplished over two centuries ago,” Hobbs said. “Traveling through the countryside and communities that remain virtually unchanged for hundreds of years offered me the opportunity to experience the same lifestyle early geologists practiced while completing their original studies.”

Hobbs and her husband Tom brought home 250 pounds of rock samples, including chalk, slate, sandstone, granite and more. Hobbs will use these specimens, as well as photos from her 21-day trip, to enrich her lectures of historical geology at Atascocita Middle School. Hobbs teaches seventh and eighth graders.

“Visual displays will provide parents with the knowledge that their children’s curriculum includes so much more than reading a book and taking tests,” Hobbs said.

Hobbs has taught for four years. A former geologist, Hobbs worked at Kingwood High as a secretary until her children graduated. She then pursued alternative certification to become a science teacher. She loves showing students how science can help them understand their world. “We all use the scientific method to answer questions,” Hobbs said.

For more information about Fund for Teachers, please visit www.fundforteachers.org.
Humble ISD teacher Janis McCorkle has been named Middle School Teacher of the Year for the State of Texas by the Texas Art Education Association. She was honored with a plaque at a banquet held in November in Galveston at the 2007 Texas Art Education Association Conference.

McCorkle has taught for 36 years, serving the Port Arthur, New Caney and Humble school districts. She has been employed by Humble ISD for 23 years, teaching at Creekwood and Riverwood middle schools. She currently teaches art to sixth, seventh and eighth graders at Riverwood Middle School and also serves as Humble’s ISD’s facilitator for the secondary visual arts. As facilitator, she distributes information about contests and workshops to secondary art teachers, attends regional meetings of art coordinators, and coordinates the Humble ISD Rodeo Art Show.

“Art education is a field I’ve always been passionate about because students get so much out of studying art,” McCorkle said.

In art class, students gain visual-spatial abilities and experience the value of reflection, self-criticism and learning from mistakes. They develop skills in seeing objectively, envisioning results, and innovating through experimentation. These abilities and character traits help students experience success in a wide variety of careers, McCorkle said.

“I want my students to grow into cultured, competent adults,” McCorkle said. “I feel like I can really reach students at the middle school level. I love this age of student.”

The Texas Art Education Association exists to promote quality visual arts education in Texas. The organization presents Teacher of the Year awards in six categories: elementary, middle school, high school, supervision/administration, higher education and museum.

McCorkle has been a member of the organization since 1970. She was nominated by an art educator who worked in Spring Branch ISD and she was selected by the Texas Art Education Association’s executive board.

McCorkle’s accomplishments include being a district finalist for Humble ISD Secondary Teacher of the Year, having students’ artwork selected for display at the Texas Education Agency and having students win multiple medals in the Visual Art Scholastic Event.

McCorkle earned a bachelor’s degree in art education from Lamar University and completed post graduate work at the University of Houston. In her free time, she enjoys supporting the Museum of Fine Arts-Houston and is a co-op member of the resale shop Retropolis, which specializes in vintage clothing and is located in The Heights.

“Janis is the consummate visual art educator who has dedicated her life to enriching students’ lives through art instruction,” Allen Miller, Humble ISD Director of Arts Education, said. “Her passion for teaching is seen each and every day in both the classroom and throughout her service to all visual art educators within Humble ISD and around the state.”

Accomplishments and Honors

Sterling Middle ESL aide Denita Vidrine graduated from the University of Phoenix with a Master in Business Administration.

Foster Secretary Tammy Fife’s son, Cody, won Grand Champion Bread at the East Montgomery County Fair in September. He made his Pap-Paw’s Jalapeño Cornbread recipe. Cody is a sophomore at New Caney High School. This is his second time to win with this recipe. He also won Grand Champion Bread at the Montgomery County Fair in Conroe.
New Arrivals

Creekwood Middle sixth grade Social Studies teacher Missy Mitchell announces the May 4 birth of triplets. Bradley Randall weighed 5 lbs, 1.5 oz., Gracie Claire weighed 3 lbs., 11 oz., and Sophie Rose weighed 4 lbs., 1 oz.

Eagle Springs first grade teacher Heather Land (Schilling) announces the June 27 birth of Morgan Bradley Land. He weighed 6 lbs., 11oz.

Lakeland office professional Susan Badeaux announces the Oct. 20 birth of her granddaughter, Abigail Elizabeth. She weighed 6 lbs., 1.6 oz. and 19 1/2” long.

Greentree music teacher Summer McKee announces the Oct. 17 birth of her daughter, Chloe Anne. She weighed 7 lbs., 8 oz.

Humble High associate principal Charles Ned announces the Oct. 28 birth of his son, Cameron Nicholas. He weighed 7 lbs., 8 oz.

Timberwood records specialist Patti Dear announces the Nov. 2 birth of her grandson Cassidy Dear. Parents Brian and Rebecca are HHS grads.

Oak Forest second grade teacher Carmen Cook announces the Oct. 30 birth of her son, Nolan Johnny Cook.

Timberwood math teacher Mike Willis announces the Nov. 6 birth of his daughter, Madeline Paige. She weighed 8 lbs., 8 oz.

Humble High government teacher Sam Pollard announces the Nov. 13 birth of his son, Milam Thomas. He weighed 7 lbs., 8 oz.

Sterling Middle choir teacher Gordon Craig announces the Nov. 8 birth of his first grandson, August Peter Behrens Whitlock. He weighed 8 lbs., 1 oz. August was born in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

North Belt Elementary kindergarten teacher Katie Baker announces the May 26 birth of her daughter, Reagan Avery. She weighed 8 lbs. 7 oz. and was 18 1/2 inches.

Wedding Bells

Alice Blazek, Technology Services Division at ISC, announces the May 5 marriage of her son, David Blazek (KHS ’99 grad) to Leslie Mennem in Enid, Oklahoma. David, an ’04 graduate of UT, is working on his doctorate in economics at Rice University. Leslie, an ‘04 graduate of Oklahoma State, is a project manager with Exxon Mobil. The newlyweds honeymooned in Eastern Europe.

Kingwood High assistant principal Mary Smith announces the Sept. 29 marriage of her daughter, Willa Virginia (Jenny), to Christopher Brian Bump in Louisiana.

Kingwood High English teacher Keri Bell married Rob Thornton on Oct. 27. Rob is the son of former English teacher, Laura Thornton.

Kingwood High secretary Marsha Miller and former deputy superintendent John Miller announce the marriage of their daughter, Heather (KHS grad ’98), to Jason Atkins on Oct. 27. The couple will live in Kingwood. Daughter Holly Miller teaches first grade at Deerwood Elementary.

Oak Forest first grade teacher Becky Yurick announces her Oct. 27 marriage to Reo Cook.

Creekwood Middle RELA teacher Kelly Gilbert announces her Sept. 22 marriage to Houston fireman Chris Marchiando in Estes Park, Colorado.

Bear Branch first grade teacher Kathy Farmer announces the Oct. 20 wedding of her daughter, Kelly, to Mark Rosin.

Sterling Middle School testing coordinator Yvonne Centanni announces the Nov. 17 marriage of her son, Doug, to Kelly Porter in Sandestin, Florida. Doug is a KHS ’95 graduate.

Sterling Middle math teacher Erin Beck announces her engagement to Curtis McMinn. A June 14, 2008, wedding is planned.
**Bright Ideas**

Pine Forest elementary’s faculty, staff, students, and parents took an evening off from cooking dinner on Tuesday, Oct. 16 and dined together at the Chick-fil-A restaurant in Atascocita in an effort to raise money to supplement parenting resources as a part of the counselor’s “Parent Resource Lending Library.”

This evening was a huge success for PFE! We were thrilled with our incredible community support from PFE staff, administrators, students, parents, and friends. The owner, Matt Michaels, awarded counselor, Jennifer Van denbrook, a check in the amount of $505.46.

The Eagle Springs library was transformed into a pirate’s world with ships, a mural of island buccaneers, driftwood, treasure chests brimming with booty and other “piratey things” as they began a reading incentive entitled *Find a Treasure in a Book*. This community effort to promote reading involved parents, teachers and student volunteers. The sounds of waves and seagulls play in the background while treasure maps, sea shells, lots of ship’s paraphernalia, a life-size pirate’s dinghy complete with the Jolly Rodger and even a shrimp net help set the scene.

Each class is represented on a wall chart by a sailing ship, and as the class reaches their reading goals, their ship “sails” across the ocean toward the treasure chest at the other side. Prizes include coming to the library in socks, pirate bookmarks, and more. According to librarian Donna Smalley, special thanks goes to library aide Georgia Hardeman and parent Bridgette Westphal for their creative efforts.

Eagle Springs plans to eventually cover their cafeteria walls with student self-portrait tiles. Oaks Elementary’s student art display is in the main hallway and incorporates the six pillars of character education.

What is YOUR Bright Idea? Please remember to share good ideas with your extended family of educators through Family Album!

Key Communicators

Our Key Communicator group has new faces and places! The new Fields Elementary Key Communicator is Lisa Bush and the Key Communicator at Pine Forest is Libby Boyce. Timberwood Middle School’s Key Communicator is Diane Henley.
New Faces and Places

Because of the number of new faces and those in new places, new and transferred employees will be featured throughout the year.

Timbers welcomes first grade teacher Shannon McIntosh, 5th grade teachers Amy Rynearson, Stacy Seay, and Brenda Davis, basic skills paraprofessional Tashana Jack, Paraeducator Leanna Lawson, interventionist Tom Watson, librarian Janet Self and paraprofessionals Dee Goeyns, Tina Davenport and Kim Fairchild.

Behavior Training Center welcomes program administrator Tammey Harlan and teachers Leslie Johnson and Jason Netardus.

Elm Grove welcomes first grade teachers Cheri Butler and Kristen Richburg, second grade teachers Danielle Cantu and Ashley Kieffer, fourth grade teacher Freyja Gilliam, nurse Jennifer Eaves, speech Jessica Johnson, and art teacher Maria Morrison.

Oak Forest welcomes third grade teacher Laura St. Clair, fifth grade teachers Niki Dixon and Tiffany Curtis, speech therapists Brooke Scottand and Cindy Trammel, and SCD teachers Cynthia Holder and Mindy Day.

Warehouse welcomes secretary Monica Crespin and warehousemen Ken Prewitt, David Sanborn and Wesley Starbuck.

Eagle Springs welcomes kindergarten teachers Sarah Donaldson, Lori Hale, Cheryl Harper and Tricia Stecker, first grade teachers Bird Cook, Kim Hendrix, Darcy Petzold, Carrie Romero and Kari Vaughn, second grade teachers Laura Eisterhold, Kerri Kohler and Robin Zorkic, third grade teachers Ashley Amato and Stephanie Baker, fourth grade teachers Anne Arceneaux, Lori Hand, Brooke King and Stephanie Phipps, and fifth grade teachers Christina Chavez, Jennifer Dolmage, Theresa Drew, Kathy Laurie and Tracie Reynolds. Also welcomed are new applied skills staff Renee McNeely, Christina Gross, Stella Hancock, Janis Lee and Sharon Robicheaux, new support team Kelsey Gaskill, Samesia Hamlett, Resa Alexander, Janette Garcia, Janie Mabry, Katharine Holmes, Lori Maugans, Georgia Hardeman and Brandi White, deaf ed. teachers Gloria Bice, Ann Brooke and Dawn Ribbeck, and cafeteria staff Julie Barker, Darlene Griffith, Juana Ramirez and Tremita Washington.


Also German and psychology teacher Katherine Kosarek, government teacher Wendy Smith, business teacher Tim O’Brien, marketing teacher Danielle Trahan, English/coach Marlis Philley, theater teacher Daniel Polk, Co-teacher/girls basketball head coach Blair Redmon, agriculture teacher Nikki Reed, co-teacher Janice Williamson and building and trades teacher Brian Viator.

New Spanish teachers are Laura Brunson, Pam McDermott and CarinaTavarez, special services teacher Brian Winfield, co-teacher and coach Patricia Cannon, co-teacher/assistant basketball coach Jasmin Roland, special services aides Caprice Matthews, Teresa Agapiou, David Rodriguez and Bernadette Young.

Principal Larry Johnson and assistant principal Juan Melendez come from from HMS.

New drill team teacher is Chelsea Jenkins, asst. dance teacher Julie Pavelek, swim coach Rachel Banes, and trainers Robert McAdams and Amy Walker. IT aides are Alta Mosby and Tina Pham, ISS aides Nora Brown, Daryl Mason, and Chris Smith, library aide Lynda Buchanan, and counseling office support Stephanie Velazquez.

HHS has a little more than 40 new faces who were at H9 last year and are on the main campus this year. We are happy to have each and every one!
More New Faces & Places

Lakeland Elementary welcomes new AP Denise Rodriguez, PPCD Karen Clawson, pre-k teachers Donna Harper and Tam Nguyen, PE aide Shannon Nash, librarian Susan Eickenhorst, para-professional/translator Yolanda Gonzalez, AB teacher Lisa Arnold, AB aides Deborah Bertrand and Tracy Eskola, special services co-teachers Amy Darbonne and Lucy Uboh, speech therapist Lori Hazlewood, CSTA Michelle Stroup, and LSSP Clancy Dee Rasmituth.

Timberwood Middle welcomes returning language arts teacher Tess Mustain. Also welcomed are new school nurse Patty Tilletson, special services teacher Terry Alexander, special services co-teachers Penny Graham and Marta Richardson, science teachers Robin Bachman and Kyle Sampson, math teachers Munir Manjiani and Allison Mowad, orchestra director Amanda Barry, theater director Diana Searcy, athletics Shauna Evans, health and athletics Janel Matson, history and athletics Randy Zilembo, and para-educators Yolanda Henderson, Debra Johnson, and Eric Middleton. TMS also says goodbye to attendance specialist Debra Pedigo, who will be working with an engineering firm.

Ross Sterling Middle welcomes employees new to the district: AP secretary Erika Gutierrez, counselors Nicole Ashby and Criscilla Hensley, LSSP intern Rebecca Smith, CSTA Mary Stowell, diagnostician Vicki Mehaffey, art teacher Lisa GoBoncan, band director Cary Dalton, band asst. director Raul Vasquez, theater arts teacher Gerry Poland, ESL teachers Amy Halterman-Chou and Sylvia Solis and aides Maria Escobar, Norma Richards and Denita Vidrine.

Also foods for today teacher Julie Grotheim, health teacher Pam Trahan, health/coach Shun Sowell, IT aide Todd Colbert, journalism teacher James Kingsmill, keyboarding teachers Kelley Craft and Denise Roberts, instructional coach/math teacher Sherry Rooks, math teachers Lisa Alter, Erin Beck, Jennifer Brumley, Shawni Elam, Sonja Green, Virginia Grimes, Michelle Holm, Misti Morrison, Jamie Patrick, Sterling Seward, Susan Shipman, Howard Thompson, Kelly Pierce and Kristi Vannett.

Other new to the district staff are athletic coordinator Lloyd Banks, PE/Coaches Jimmy Beasley, Jennifer Foret, Jayce Howard, Audrea Samuel, and Jason Watkins, RELA teachers Christian Bailey, Tameka Bartley, Jennifer Castro, Frances Flores, Wanda George, Maria Jasper, Janie Lamb, Joy Love, Sharon McCorkle, Jennifer Pali, Cornelia Patterson, Melissa Sullivan, Ana Torres and Marie Workman.


Spanish teacher Indra Mota, special services/coach Harrison Arceneaux, and special services teachers Tracy Johnson, Deborah Kimble, Mary Lunn, Kyna Savage, Callie Shepherd, and Antonio Vela, DSP Christina Anderson and Tarif Shabazz, and aides Jennifer Dixon, Kimberly Gee, Kerri LaCour, Amy Page, LeVerna Steen and Brittany Washington.

Transfers to Ross Sterling from other Humble ISD campuses include AP secretaries Alice Boyd and Cindy Springer, attendance specialist Shirley Gregory, bookkeeper Debbie Walker, librarian Kristen Gladden, librarian aide Teresa Wilson, nurse Beth Robbins, receptionist Mary Lou Santos, registrar Dianne Bullard, speech Tanya Fisher-Miller, instructional coach/RELA Karen Gallow, student support coordinator Denise Gary and and LSSP Michelle Wolf.

Other transfers include testing coordinator Yvonne Centanni, AVID/study skills teacher Teresa Johnson, art teacher Chris Douglas, choir teacher Gordon Craig, ESL teacher Cynthia Ashworth, industrial tech. teacher Cecil Collins, math teachers Sarah Degge and Patty Knobloch, orchestra director Cindy McMurry, science teacher Kim Calfee, social studies teachers Kathy Fontenot, Jeremy Miller and Michael Taylor, special services teachers Kim Gaddis, Mary Allison, Beulah Epperson, Marylyn Livingston and Sarah Maute, and aide Terri Johnson.
Quest Seniors, under the guidance of facilitators Holly Schoettlin, James Nerad and Michelle Neel, hosted a costume dance in October to benefit children affected by civil war in Northern Uganda. All funds raised by ticket sales goes to support Schools for Schools, part of the non-profit "Invisible Children" foundation.

The Quest seniors are also collecting donations for a garage sale to benefit Schools for Schools. They will be taking all small donations Nov. 26-30. The sale will be on Dec. 1 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Any questions about the garage sale or larger donations may be directed to James Nerad at james.nerad@humble.k12.tx.us.

Students in Christina Rodriguez’s second grade class at Woodland Hills Elementary are learning something very important along with their math lessons. They are learning the value of service to others.

Rodriguez decided to turn her class participation in the school-wide Thanksgiving food drive into a service learning project. She gave each of her 21 students five dollars. Their homework was to take the money to a grocery store and buy as much non-perishable food as they could without exceeding the five dollars, including tax.

In addition, each student multiplied his/her money times the number of students in class to discover how much they spent as a class. They calculated the amount of change returned from adding receipt totals. They discovered the returned change for the entire class came to just over $4. Some of the math lessons included counting and sorting the 375 food items purchased and creating bar graphs and line graphs comparing the types of food items. “They learned a lot of math,” said Rodriguez. “Yesterday we spent two hours on math related to our food purchase.”

“Thanksgiving has always been a very special time for service in our family,” said Rodriguez. Her late husband, Joaquin Rodriguez, initiated a food drive partnership eight years ago in Fort Stockton, Texas, between the fire department and the schools. This project was a benefit for the elderly, and is still a yearly project in Fort Stockton today.

“This year my husband's birthday falls on Thanksgiving, so I did the school project in his honor,” said Rodriguez. “My three daughters and I always do special service in my husband’s memory at Thanksgiving. In previous years my oldest daughter decided that instead of receiving birthday presents she wanted money to be donated to the American Cancer Society.”

It’s not surprising that Rodriguez’s class won the school-wide food drive. All proceeds from the Woodland Hills Elementary food drive benefit the Society of St. Stephen.

Grants are out there!

Check out this site: http://www.aauw.org/education/fga/fellowships_grants/career_development.cfm

The American Association of University Women is offering Career Development Grants to support women who hold a bachelor’s degree and are preparing to advance their careers, change careers, or re-enter the workforce. Special consideration is given to AAUW members, women of color, and women pursuing their first advanced degree or credentials in nontraditional fields.

Grants in the amount of $2,000 - $12,000 provide support for course work beyond a bachelor’s degree, including a master’s degree, second bachelor’s degree, or specialized training in technical or professional fields. Funds are available for distance learning. Course work must be taken at an accredited two- or four-year college or university, or at a technical school that is fully licensed or accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Funds are not available for doctoral-level work. Deadline to apply is December 15, 2007.
Condolences to Hortensia Arredondo, paraprofessional at the Behavior Training Center, on the loss of her father.

Sympathy to Birdie Waddell, custodian at AHS, on the death of her sister.

Condolences to Roxie Powell, custodian at AHS and Naobi O’Connor, custodian at SMS, on the death of their mother.

Sympathy to Marva Barnett-Suggs, Career & Technical Education Special Populations Coordinator, on the loss of her father.

Condolences to Molly Stephens, Kingwood High School ASL teacher, on the Oct. 16 loss of her father-in-law.

Sympathy to Dorrie Welch, first grade teacher at Bear Branch, on the loss of her grandmother.

Condolences to Ondre Cooper, Desktop Support Specialist, on the loss of his mother-in-law.

Sympathy to Lisa GoBoncan, Sterling Middle art teacher, on the loss of her great grandmother

Condolences to Sonja Green, Sterling Middle math teacher, on the loss of her grandmother

Sympathy to Denise Roberts, Sterling Middle keyboarding teacher, on the loss of her mother in a traffic accident.

Woodland Hills assistant principal Debi Beard’s husband was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident. Ken Beard was LifeFlighted to Hermann Memorial Hospital. He had a ruptured spleen, several broken ribs, a broken collar bone and a broken shoulder blade. Ken is the owner of Rapid Refill Ink and a wonderful supporter of Humble ISD, the Education Foundation, and our campus volunteer programs.

Sterling Middle School RELA teacher Marie Workman has returned to school following surgery.

Sterling Middle keyboarding teacher Denise Roberts’ father was seriously injured in an auto accident last week. Denise lost her mother in the same accident.

Although not yet open, Humble ISD’s second CARE ATC clinic has an official location! The clinic will be near the intersection of Timber Forest and Atascocita Road. The building is currently being renovated and will open for business soon.

As with the Kingwood Town Center clinic, basic family physician services will be provided free of charge to employees participating in Humble ISD medical plans. Information should be coming soon on when the clinic will open.

The dates for the Humble ISD Secondary Science & Engineering Fair is Saturday, January 19 and the date for the Elementary Science & Engineering Fair is Saturday, March 29. Both events will be at Kingwood Park High School.

Ecards are a fast, inexpensive and creative way to send greetings, but they’re also a tool for scammers who trick people into downloading viruses, spyware, Trojans and more!

Some scammers actually ask permission to install rogue software on your computer using a “EULA” (End User License Agreement) that most ecard recipients don’t bother to read. Some ecard recipients are told to download certain software to read their message. Then, this program bombard's everyone in their address books with scam ecards and unwanted marketing messages.

Pass along to Parents...

Pass these tips to improve communication with children along to your moms and dads for their parenting toolkits.

1. Teach children to listen. Get their attention before you speak. Use their names whenever possible.
2. Speak in a quiet voice. And whisper sometimes so children have to listen. Children like this.
3. Look a child in the eyes so you can tell when he or she understands. Bend or sit down to “become the child’s size.”
4. Respect children and use a courteous tone of voice. If we talk to our children as we would our friends, our youngsters may be more likely to seek us out as confidants.

Source: www.kidsource.com