

The Grady Gazette

A publication of Grady Elementary PTA
Volume 2, Issue 5, March, 2014

From PTA President, Damaris Allen

Dear Members of the Grady Elementary Community,

I hope you have enjoyed this mild Florida winter and are ready for a wonderful Spring.



I'm pleased to report to you that Grady Elementary PTA has had a very successful year thus far. We have had a fun and financially successful Spring fundraiser, Tiger Trek. Over the course of this year we have funded technological, academic and security improvements for Grady Elementary. Specifically, we are about to begin the first phase of replacing the chain link perimeter fence of the school with a wrought iron-style fence (we estimate this cost at approximately \$15,000 for the first phase). We have also funded \$9,000 toward academic materials and have pledged or paid \$6,000 toward grants for items that include an author's visit, iPads, teachers' conference fees, software fees, e-books and therapy supplies for teachers at Grady Elementary. This is in addition to the \$3,000 we funded over the summer of 2013 for musical instruments. Finally, we paid \$3,400 for extended afterschool tutoring for Grady Elementary students. We are still taking grant applications and are enthusiastic about funding educational enhancements for Grady students.

We are grateful for having the opportunity to enhance everyone's experience at Grady Elementary. We are very grateful to Grady Elementary teachers, staff and administrators, so many of whom go above and beyond in so many ways. We see and appreciate their hard work. We see the results in the happiness, literacy and character of our children. We are also grateful to the parents and grandparents who have volunteered and donated to our school through fundraisers. It is your contribution of time and money that allows Grady Elementary PTA to fund the educational enhancements that make our school better for everyone. I know Grady Elementary is also grateful to you for your service and donations.

I'm further pleased to inform you that instead of soliciting items for the baskets that the PTA raffles off at the Spring Musical, we will obtain prizes and gifts from sponsoring local companies and will raffle those gifts off at the Spring Musical. We will be seeking new or gently used books from parents so that we can make book baskets for the Spring Musical and potentially add some books to the school's library. To donate books, please bring them to the front office, where there is a collection basket for them.



Go Grady Tigers!

The Grady Gazette is a publication of the Grady Elementary PTA. It is designed to keep our entire school community informed about all of the activities of the Grady Elementary PTA. It is published six times a year in September, October, November/Dec., January, Feb./March and April/May.

The deadline for submission of articles is the tenth of the month prior to the publication date. Please email submissions to:

GradyPTACommunications@gmail.com

Our Mission: The Mission of the Grady Elementary PTA is to provide programs and activities to support our students, teachers and parents in order to enhance the educational experience at Grady Elementary School.

Principal: Kristine Dosal
PTA President: Damaris Allen
Editor: Ellen Lyons



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Newly Designed Website:

www.gradytigers.org

Follow us on Twitter!

@gradytiger



I'm also pleased to inform you that Florida PTA has approved our bylaw amendments and that we will expand the board to 10 members in 2014-2015. We are currently seeking to fill the positions of Secretary, VP of Volunteer Relations, VP of Sponsorship, Fifth Grade Parent, Dads Club Coordinator and Family Night Coordinator for the 2014-15 school year. We will also be seeking committee members for the Events, Fundraising, Volunteering and Membership Committees. We will continue to rely on our wonderfully helpful Homeroom Parents. There will be many opportunities for leadership and service in the PTA next year, so please start thinking about how you can be involved. Please feel free to call or email me about these roles (you will not commit yourself just by inquiring). Thanks again for the work you do for Grady Elementary.

Sincerely,
Damaris Allen, President (email: GradyElementaryPTA@gmail.com)

"I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy." Rabindranath Tagore, Bengali Nobel Prize Winner for Literature (1861-1941)

Membership, By Debbie Bresnahan



Dear Members of the Grady Elementary Community,

I am happy to report we are at 284 PTA members! We are 37% ahead of last year's membership of 204. I have a wonderful membership committee that has helped me this year: Michael Gaines, Chely Sierra, Jill Harris and fellow board member, Ellen Lyons. I appreciate the assistance they have given me as well as their friendship.

I have applied for an Early Bird award as well as a Gold Grandparents Involvement Award. I am also planning on applying for a newsletter award. This has been an amazing year for our PTA and we deserve to be recognized.

We already have 6 people signed up for next year! We included membership forms with the Kindergarten Round Up packets and obtained 6 new members for 2014-2015. We will be trying something new this year and will be asking you to join the PTA for the 2014-2015 year at the Spring Musical.

Thanks so much for joining the PTA and investing in our Grady community.

Debbie Bresnahan, VP of Membership
(GradyPTAMembership@gmail.com)



Tiger Trot

On March 2, 2014, Grady Elementary started Tiger Trot, a daily running club that meets before school. There is mounting evidence that exercise prior to classroom work is extremely beneficial for elementary school children. Students may learn better and be more focused, behavioral issues could diminish, and they may achieve higher test scores and gain self-esteem. We encourage you to jumpstart your children's day by allowing them to participate in Tiger Trot from 7:30 am until 7:50 am each sunny, dry school day.



Box Top Holiday Competition Results

Over the holiday season, Grady Elementary families clipped and collected 7,409 Box Tops for Education! These efforts raised \$740.90 for our school and are much appreciated.

The Third Grade came in third place with 1,119 box tops. The First Grade came in second place with 1,432 box tops. And . . .

The Second Grade came in FIRST PLACE with 1,596 box tops!

The Second Grade won an ice cream party that occurred on March 21! Thanks to all of you for collecting Box Tops for Education.



Welcome New School Nurse, Kristen Orihuela

Grady Elementary has welcomed its new school health assistant, Kristen Orihuela, LPN. Ms. Orihuela is a Tampa native (even her parents are Tampa natives), so she knows our area very well. She has a husband and five year old son. She was warmly welcomed by Grady staff and parents and she looks forward to medically assisting Grady students.

2014 Tiger Trek – The Walk of Champions

By Jessica Schentrup
Vice President of Fundraising
(GradyPTAFundraising@gmail.com)



On Friday, January 24, 2014, the Grady students set out on Tiger Trek. It was sunny and a cool 60 degrees; a perfect day for exercise outdoors. Students were cheered on by volunteers and were pumped up by music played by Mr. Florio. At the conclusion of the walk, every student received a free Whole Foods shopping bag and filled his or her bag with many prizes from our sponsors including 365 breakfast bars from Whole Foods, Gogurts from the PTA, and dental hygiene supplies, T-shirts, sunglasses, pencils and backpacks from Abdoney Orthodontics and South Tampa Pediatric Dentistry.

Notably, Tiger Trek generated \$13,600 in revenue; \$4,900 from corporate and family sponsors and \$8,700 from pledges from Grady families. 100% of these funds from Tiger Trek will be reinvested in the school to enhance our students' experiences at Grady. Comparing the results to last year's Walk-a-thon, I am excited to report a 73% increase in pledges from Grady families! And an overall participation rate of 38%. As we look ahead to next year, we plan for Tiger Trek to be even bigger. Our goal is an increase in the participation rate to 60% - that means 100 additional Grady Families supporting Tiger Trek. We plan to have more prizes, more activities and more sponsors. We are confident we can make this happen with your support and support from the Grady Community.

Lastly, the students were rewarded with exciting prizes for their efforts. While every Grady student that participated in Tiger Trek deserves a shout out, the following students and classes achieved stellar results. Congratulations to all of our 2014 Tiger Trek winners!

The **grand prize winners** with the most donations overall are: In First Place is **Jake Perez**, who raised \$305 in donations and won the Super Swimmer Basket donated by Seal Swim School. In Second Place is **Kennedy Gilbert**, who raised \$200 in donations and won a Sparkling Teeth Basket donated by South Tampa Pediatric Dentistry. **The students with the most donations in each grade level are Spencer Shoonmaker, Rhyder Robinson, Drew Bresnahan, Sydney Jackson, Felicita Ruiz, Kennedy Gilbert, Jake Perez, and Ibrahim El Sawalhi.** They are the lucky winners of the LA Fitness Fit Parents Packs. **The top class with the most donations is Mrs. Ward's 1st grade class**, with \$533 in donations. They are the lucky winners of the Yogurt Party at Yogurtology (pictures on page 8). **The classes with the most donations in each grade are Kindergarten: Tolbert/ Ledo, 2nd: Lacrosse, 3rd: Coppes, 4th: Reyher, 5th: Austin, SE: McAlister.** These lucky winners enjoyed a Pizza Party at school from Sally O' Neal's Pizza.

The Second Annual Grady PTA Tiger Trek Walk-a-thon was a great success. The students had an opportunity to raise money for Grady while exercising and they had FUN! We would like to **thank our Grady students and parents for their diligent work in collecting pledges. A BIG thank you to our Grady teachers, business and family sponsors and volunteers for their hard work. Tiger Trek would not have been a success without your support!**

Tiger Trek Sponsors Gold Sponsors:



Silver Sponsors



-and-



Family Sponsors:

The de la Garza Family

The Hickinbotham Family

The Robinson Family

The Schentrup Family

The Iles Family

The Grady Elementary Family

In Kind Sponsors:

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THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS!

Sponsorship Update

Dear Members of the Grady Elementary Community,
We have now entered the second half of the school year. Whew! Time is sure flying by! I would like to begin by extending a very big THANK YOU to New York Life and the Ruiz family for their generous \$3,780.00 donation. This money will go a long way towards making our "Grow Grady" project a reality.

I am very pleased to announce that we will soon begin phase 1 of the "Grow Grady" project. This phase includes the first stages of installing beautiful fencing around Grady Elementary. Presently, we are accepting commercial bids for the fence. If you know anyone who would be interested in submitting a bid for this project, please have them contact me at the email address listed below.

Part of the fencing plan will include the opportunity to purchase a fence panel. These panels will have a permanent engraved plaque on them, with either the business name or wording of your choice. It is an excellent way to advertise your business, leave a remembrance of a past loved one, or to display your own name as a symbol of strong Grady support. Exact details will be announced soon.

Since this project requires a larger portion of the PTA budget, the PTA set a general meeting on March 24 to vote on the spending of these funds.

Please keep your eyes open for special announcements about the opportunity to purchase a fence panel with a permanent engraved plaque to commemorate your business, your family or a loved one. And, as always, thank you so very much for your continued support of Grady Elementary. Together, we are making a difference!

Sincerely,

Kris House

VP of Sponsorships (GradyPTASponsorships@gmail.com)

Fifth Grade Report

Fifth Grade T-shirts will soon be distributed. The fifth grade class trip to Busch Gardens will take place on May 23. Fifth grade parents are meeting during the month of March to discuss the planning for the fifth grade banquet. The fifth grade banquet will take place on June 5.

We anticipate an amazing presentation at the fifth grade banquet, and we need your help to pull it off. The event organizers are going to do a **slideshow of baby pictures of fifth grade Grady students. To ensure that your child's baby photo is included in the slideshow presentation, please email a baby picture of your child to Janneth Romero at gradytiger_yb@yahoo.com with the name of the student in the subject line.**

A colorful graphic with the words "Thank You!" in large, multi-colored letters. The "T" is blue, "h" is green, "a" is red, "n" is purple, "k" is orange, "Y" is pink, "o" is blue, and "U!" is green.

**THANK YOU TO OUR
SPONSORS:**

LEADER OF THE PACK

Ruiz Family & New York Life

Silly Dilly's

**Kuhn Honda-Volkswagen
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BENGAL

The Lyons Family

**Chris and Sarah Boyd and
Butler & Boyd, P.A.**

Gerry and Linda Gilbert

**The Pham Family (for the 5th
Grade Class)**

TIGER

**Hoffman Realty – South Tampa
Property Management**

Lucy Espana and Family

Jack and Denise Hamilton

**Mike and Van Tuong Vu Phan
Esther and Jeremy Muench**

CUB

**Pam LaCrosse (In recognition of
Kay Hance)**

Carine Lachat

Erin McCormick

A colorful graphic with the words "Thank You!" in large, multi-colored letters. The "T" is blue, "h" is green, "a" is red, "n" is purple, "k" is orange, "Y" is pink, "o" is blue, and "U!" is green.

Yearbook Update

The 2013-2014 Grady Elementary **Yearbooks are sold out**. You can go to the website to get on the waiting list to order the yearbook. (<http://grady.mysdhc.org/index.cfm?p=yearbook-waitlist>). Once the waiting list reflects that 25 additional yearbooks will be sold, we will place an order for more yearbooks.

I would like to recognize the wonderful members of my yearbook committee who have helped me so much this year. The photographers who have snapped wonderful, expressive photographs at various school events are **Wendy de la Garza, Patricia Cannon, Kathy Maxie, and Mitsu Capote**. The ladies who have helped me immensely with getting the word out about the yearbook and with soliciting sponsorships and sales are: **Sophia Ruiz, Roxanna Peterson, Bernise Ahumada, Liliana Sapienza, Jennifer Postlewait and Jennifer Narvaes**. Thank you so much for your hard work and support; you forever have my gratitude!

I also want to thank Grady parents, volunteers and businesses in the South Tampa area for your support of our yearbook. We appreciate the advertisements and donations that many families and businesses have made to sponsor our yearbook. Next year, our goal is to raise sponsorship money early in order to reduce the price of the yearbook so that it will be more affordable for everyone.

We hope that you will enjoy the beautiful memories that will be contained in the 2013-2014 yearbook.

Sincerely,

Janneth Romero, Yearbook Coordinator
(gradytiger_yb@yahoo.com)

Thank you to our Yearbook Page Sponsors. Their logos appear on the back page of this newsletter.

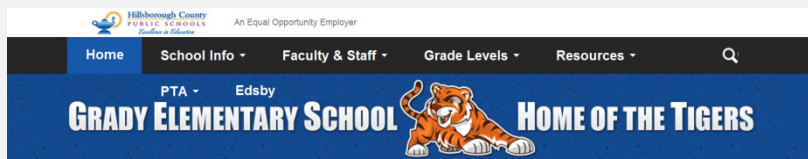
Fast Signs
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Fifi Fine Resale Apparel
Cakes Plus
Shells
Seal Swim School
Debora Kent's
D'lites Emporium
Kuts
Cherry Family Chiropractic
Jersey's Mikes
PDQ
Staples
Sanano Martial Arts

Car Magnets – New Design

Grady Elementary PTA is soon going to sell car magnets with the new Grady Elementary logo. The magnets are 4 inches by 6 inches and oval. They are guaranteed not to peel by Teamwork Imprinted Sportswear (they are a silkscreen painted-on magnet as opposed to a sticker on top of a magnet). These kinds of magnets are a bit more expensive, but designed to look good for a long time. These magnets are not a fundraiser for us; they cost us \$4.20 each plus shipping. We will be selling them for \$5 (cash or check) through a flyer home or at doughnut sales and school events. This car magnet will be a high quality and great looking way to show your Grady pride.

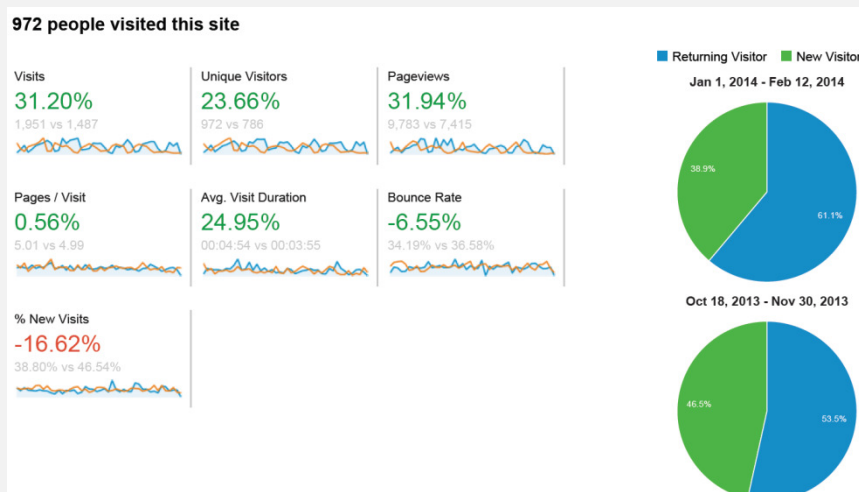


Website Update



We have improved the website since our last report in January. The PTA purchased the domain name www.gradytigers.com to make it easier for parents to remember and find our website. Additionally, we used the website as a place for volunteers to sign up for Tiger Trek and Jump Rope For Heart. Grady Elementary used the website to help parents sign up for third grade parent teacher conferences online. Overall visits to the site have increased, but many of these visitors are repeat visitors, meaning that parents are using the site for updated information. We hope that the website will become the source of the most up-to-date information about the school and that parents will use the website often.

Below is a chart which shows website use from January 1, 2014 to February 12, 2014. It shows 31% increased use of the website, increased duration of website visits and that a greater percentage of each of the website users is a returning visitor. This lets us know that people are consulting the website for substantive information. Also, we created a webpage called "Grady at a Glance" that contains links to the policies and information that will be helpful to people who are new to Grady Elementary. The Grady at a Glance document is reproduced at the end of this newsletter so that you can see the type of information that will be available to families new to Grady Elementary.



Grady PTA 2013-2014 Calendar of Events

PTA Email: gradyelementarypta@gmail.com

March

- 3/6 Thurs 12-1 Board Meeting
3/10 - 3/14 SPRING BREAK HOLIDAY—No School
3/24 Mon 7:30 am PTA General Meeting to vote on perimeter fence

April

- 4/3 Thurs 12-1 Board Meeting
4/18 Fri Non-Student Day – No School

May

- 5/5-5/9 Teacher Appreciation Week
5/14 Wed 5-7 PM Spring Musical/PTA General Meeting
5/26 Mon MEMORIAL DAY

June

- 6/2 Mon 12-1 Faculty/5th Grade Volleyball Game
6/3 Tues 8:15 am to 9:15 am, Fifth Grade Award Ceremony in the Cafeteria
6/5 Thur Fifth Grade Banquet in Cafeteria (volunteer set up at 9 am, banquet at 11:30 am)
6/6 Fri Last day of school! 11:30 am, Fifth Grade Clap Out



2013 - 2014 PTA Board Contact Information

President: Damaris Allen (GradyElementaryPTA@gmail.com)
VP of Membership: Debbie Bresnahan (GradyPTAMembership@gmail.com)
VP of Communications: Ellen Lyons (GradyPTACommunications@gmail.com)
VP of Sponsorships: Kris House (GradyPTASponsorships@gmail.com)
VP of Fundraising: Jessica Schentrup (GradyPTAFundraising@gmail.com)
VP of Events: Jennifer Narvaes (GradyPTAEvents@gmail.com)
Secretary: Melissa Azevedo (mazevedo@tbo.com)
Treasurer: Julie Cuevas (jbc2011j@gmail.com)

Tiger Trek, January 24, 2014



Kindergarten Round Up



Unlock the Treasures of Reading Night



Yogurtology Class Party



Carol W. Kurdell – Chair
Susan L. Valdes – Vice Chair
Doretha W. Edgecomb
April Griffin
Candy Olson
Cindy Stuart
Stacy R. White, Pharm.D.

Grady Elementary At A Glance – A Guide to Parents, Now On Our Website

School Facts

- Enrollment: 458
- An “A” School, as determined by Florida Department of Education
- Each class has a Smartboard or Mimeo system and a computer area
- Two computer labs
- Free breakfast for all students daily. Parents may eat breakfast with their children in the lunchroom
- Each student has access to learning software such as MyON and Accelerated Reader

Uniform Information

- Uniform Policy: <http://grady.mysdhc.org/uniform-policy>
- Free/\$1 Uniform Swaps held at Meet Your Teacher Event, Conference Night and other events
- To purchase polo shirts with Grady's logo, you can purchase shirts online at Land's End (www.landsend.com/shop/school-uniforms/-/N-g54) or in person at Golden Egg (www.goldenegguniforms.com).
- To purchase plain uniform shirts and all other uniform items, you can visit JCP, Old Navy, Walmart, Target, Kohl's and Bealls
- To purchase spirit shirts, you can call or go in person to Teamwork Imprinted Sportswear, 2403 S Dale Mabry Hwy, Tampa, FL 33629, Tel: (813) 258-0331

Before and After School Information

- If you are on campus during school hours (8:00 am to 2:15 pm), you must present identification and check in at the school office. Please fill out a SERVE form, which will be sent home the first day of school, if you would like to volunteer at any time during the school year.
- Drop off options: Car line loop (student patrols will open car doors between 7:30 am and 7:50 am). Park and walk is also available.
- Aftercare Providers: YMCA is on site, all other providers pick up and drive students to their premises. A full list of providers is here: <http://grady.mysdhc.org/afterschoolcare>
- School Events Include: Tiger Tears, Grandparents' Day Breakfast, Fall Festival, Storybook Parade, Thanksgiving Feast, Winter Concert, Volunteer/Donor Appreciation Breakfast, Tiger Trek, Valentine's Day Concert (Kindergarten only), Spring Musical
- School website with student handbook, school policies, teacher photographs and updated information on school events: www.grady.mysdhc.org

Parents and Teachers Association (“PTA”) Information

- Current PTA Membership is 272 (Likely to win PTA Gold Award for Grandparent Involvement)
- Membership cost is \$6 for one member; \$10 for two
- PTA Communication Box. Ask a front office staffer to place any papers or payments in the PTA box.
- See prior newsletters with photos of events and information about Grady Elementary <http://grady.mysdhc.org/ptanews>

Thank you to the companies that sponsor our school:



House of Huckleberry

Thank you to our Yearbook Page Sponsors:

