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TO LEARNING, INC.

**AUSTIN COLLABORATIVE OF CULTURAL  
AND EDUCATIONAL SITES AND SCHOOLS**

**Mission: To promote and facilitate experiential learning.  
April 2009 NEWSLETTER**



**Dr. Gary Vliet, presents a lesson about the essential physical principles involved in a ‘solar car’ to a class of AISD LBJ Liberal Arts & Science Academy physics students, among them: Alan Xu, Frank Lima, Sam Wolfson, and Brian Lackey.**

Two lessons were conducted at the LBJ Science Academy in December 2008 to introduce the students in John Stormberg’s senior physics class to solar energy by having them build a solar powered model car from ‘kits’ provided. The project was conducted by ACCESS to Learning, Inc. using funds from the Texas Solar Energy Society (TXSES) which purchased the kits. Donna Vliet arranged the project with John Stormberg and Gary Vliet conducted the workshop.

The lessons were conducted over two days, about ten days apart, to allow the students to build their cars. The first day Gary presented a Power Point lecture, which overviewed solar energy and a variety of solar applications. Each student received a copy of a thirty-

four page Power Point handout, as well as a seven-page write-up about the solar car design and the functions of the components. The students at the Academy were able to grasp the essential physical principles involved in a 'solar car'. He also demonstrated in general how the kits are assembled, but only in general, as it was intentionally left to the students to come up with their own unique designs.

The kit components included: a solar panel with 6 cells (to produce about 3 volts), a small D-C motor, a set of gears, front and rear axles, and wheels. These kits were purchased from Solar World in Colorado. The solar powered car is a *great vehicle* to introduce students to a variety of physics principles: solar cells (solid state physics, conversion of solar radiation to electricity), the motor (converts electrical energy to rotary mechanical energy), the gears (teach speed and torque relationships), and finally, the wheels and road (which permit conversion of rotary motion to linear motion through friction). Yes, friction is essential to many things we do, but is often thought of in a negative way.

The second lesson, which was conducted about 10 days later, occurred on a very crisp but fortunately, sunny day. A brief amount of time was spent in the classroom to allow the students to put finishing touches on their cars. As expected, there were a variety of designs in the six cars completed. Two of the students had designed the solar panel to allow it to be adjusted according to the direction of the sun. The solar car race was held on the LBJ/LASA tennis courts, with one KVUE TV camera and a few other people in attendance (Two girls from China were visiting the television station and came to see "the race."). ACCESS Board Members Don Cook and Donna Vliet took photos. ACCESS is in the second year providing programming to develop increased awareness of renewable energy resources.



**Physics student Frasier Lijstrand prepares his solar car for the race.**



**Jim Furguson, McCallum High School Social Studies Teacher, Provides Professional Development for the ACCESS to Learning, Inc. Traveling Program, January 2009.**

### **The U.S. Constitution and The Bill of Rights Humanities Texas Exhibits**

Over twenty teachers and media specialists attended a January professional development session led by Jim Furguson, expert in the US Constitution and master teacher and Social Studies Chair at McCallum High School.

Mr. Furguson engaged the group in planning to use the traveling exhibits generously provided by Humanities Texas to ACCESS to Learning, Inc. through their mini-grant program. The Blessings of Liberty: The U.S. Constitution and The Bill of Rights are now circulating in nine Austin Independent School District schools for one and two week periods of time for use in developing critical thinking skills necessary to the understanding of our country's principles and development.

Jim provided links to state testing criteria and led discussion in techniques teachers might use to bring the exhibits into the context of meeting objectives for TEKS. He framed his discussion and exercises around using primary and secondary source documents to explore the theme of conflict taking us back to when the framers of the Constitution held debates on what was to be included in the document as well as the later debates on the challenges in the country that resulted in the Bill of Rights.

Learning on the diagonal, moving beyond content and our habits of thinking can be applied to using the exhibits to engage students in discussing these important documents, the context in which they were created and the context today that makes them work. When fifth grade students are asked to summarize the creation of the Bill of Rights, they can delve into the reasons why it was created. Eight graders can use the exhibit to visualize some of the rights that are guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. Twelve grade students can explain the role of limited government and how it is being discussed today.

Teachers using the exhibit are asked to collect photos and use photo release forms when students are pictured in the photo. Counts of how many students see the exhibit are to be turned into Sue Soy along with worksheets or exercises developed. As we hear from the librarians and teachers who were fortunate enough to become part of the ACCESS to Learning, Inc. family, we will record and report those stories to Humanities Texas.

One teacher said: She had been “to the best presentation ... that she could remember in a long time.” The teacher went on and on about the guest speaker's mesmerizing delivery, knowledge about our nation's founding documents, and her own excitement about using these two particular exhibits this year.

ACCESS to Learning, Inc. appreciates the use of the AISD Professional Development Center, located next to the Ann Richards School for Women Leaders, to conduct the seminar for the second year.

The award of this exhibit to ACCESS to Learning, Inc. draws funding from *We the People*, an initiative designed by National Endowment for the Humanities to strengthen the teaching study, and understanding of American history and culture. “This program is made possible in part by a grant from Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities”.





Texas Music Museum  
1009 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street Austin, Texas 78702  
(512) 472-8891  
[www.texasmusicmuseum.org](http://www.texasmusicmuseum.org)



*Texas Music Museum proudly presents*

## **“Muziky, Muziky and Musikfest”**

*A Texas Music History Exhibit focusing on German and Czech contributions to Texas Music. These lesser known, however very important aspects of Texas Music heritage are presented through photos, biographies, maps, and fascinating artifacts, all of which illuminate the historical and cultural significance of German and Czech music in Texas.*

*The exhibit also includes immigration histories, rare memorabilia, and music collections, such as German sheet music, reproducing piano rolls, original recordings from the early 1900's, and one of the first accordions used for performance in Texas, dating from the turn of the century. The Czech portion of the exhibit focuses on early Texas Czech Bands, folk songs, and dance halls, as well as the more recent Texas Czech bands.*

*These two music history exhibits, “Musikfest”, German contributions to Texas Music, and “Muziky, Muziky”, Czech contributions to Texas Music, run concurrently through April 2009.*

**Open FREE to the public weekdays 9-5 for self-guided tours for more information or for guided group tours call (512) 471-0520 or (512) 471-472-8891. \*Check local listings or Texas Music Museum website for information on Spring 2009 Czech/German Exhibit celebration and live music program**



**This project is funded and supported in part by the City of Austin through the Cultural Arts Division and by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.**





THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

### **New Name for UT's Center for American History**

The Center for American History at The University of Texas at Austin has been named for Dolph Briscoe, former governor of Texas, following gifts totaling \$15 million.

The naming of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History recognizes his support for preserving and promoting Texas and U.S. history. "It is especially fitting that the Center be named for one of the most ardent champions of the history of Texas and our nation," said William Powers Jr., president of The University of Texas at Austin. "Governor Briscoe's efforts on behalf of the university are well known, particularly his support of the Center for American History.

"My hope is that this gift will allow the Center to not only continue," Briscoe said, "but greatly expand, its efforts on behalf of the cause of history. I have always believed that knowing and appreciating history can make a big difference for the future of our state and the future of our country."

**New Exhibit: On view through May 30, at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, Sid Richardson Hall, UT Campus.** Contact: Lynn Bell, Asst. Director for Exhibits and Material Culture, [l.bell@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:l.bell@austin.utexas.edu), 495-4452.

### ***DANGER PAY: A Photojournalist in the Middle East* Photographs by Carol Spencer Mitchell**

"People say that images speak for themselves," stated the late Carol Spencer Mitchell. "They forget that when a photographer creates an image, the flow of time passing has been arrested." Spencer Mitchell's observation reveals her inner struggle while working to provide news images for the media and her concern that she was an active participant in a process that resulted in "the triumph of image over reality."

This deeply felt worry about the nature and meaning of her work serves as the underlying theme of this exhibition and her book, *Danger Pay: Memoir of a Photojournalist in the Middle East, 1984–1994*, published by the University of Texas Press as part of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History's Focus on American History Series.

Although the events that Spencer Mitchell records took place a generation ago, their repercussions reverberate in the conflicts going on in the Middle East today. Likewise, her concern about "the triumph of image over reality" takes on greater urgency as our knowledge of the world becomes ever more filtered by virtual media.

Carol Spencer Mitchell (1954–2004) covered the Middle East and North Africa for many leading U.S. and European publications, including *Newsweek*, *Time*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Look*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsday*, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

**Austin Public Library Bookstore**

**Recycled Reads**

**5335 Burnet Road, Austin, TX 78756**

Hours of Operation: Tuesdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Thursdays 3-9 p.m., Saturdays  
12 noon-5 p.m., and Sundays 12 noon-5 p.m.

All proceeds directly benefit the Austin Public Library.

The Recycled Reads bookstore seeks to advance City of Austin go green initiatives. Items Recycled Reads is unable to sell will go to Books Beyond Borders, which through Project School House provides books and funding to third-world schools and libraries. Unusable items will be sent via Books Beyond Borders to companies that will recycle them into building material. Recycled Reads gives books a second chance and will be an active participant in the City's Zero Waste Plan by ensuring obsolete materials are handled in an environmentally responsible way by keeping these materials out of landfills. Additionally, the Library will contribute to a socially responsible cause by ensuring knowledge and learning is passed along to others in need.

Thousands of books and assorted media are priced to sell at \$1 and \$2. Better books starting at \$5 and up. The store will be operated primarily by volunteers with materials withdrawn from the Library's collection and donations. To volunteer for the bookstore or for more information call (512) 974-7443. Donations are accepted during open hours and by appointment (512) 323-5123.

“Recycled Reads, Austin Public Library's used book store, is a new, incredible resource for teachers / parents / anyone working with kids, as well as for book lovers in general. There are tons of children's books -- either books retired from branches of Austin Public Library, or donations to the Library -- and they're available cheap. It's a great resource to build children's literacy with classroom libraries, child care libraries, and home libraries;” reports Mindy Reed, Bookstore Manager.

Teachers say: “Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.”

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[www.austinaccess.org](http://www.austinaccess.org)