



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



Bowie Elementary School recently raised \$4,352.71 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Mrs. Hull's fifth grade class was the school's top fund-raising class, donating \$526.46, and earning a Pasta Party from Olive Garden. Also picture in Counselor Natalie Fikac, far left, who organized the drive.

Bowie Elementary + blood cancer lessons = \$4,300 to find a cure

The students and staff at James Bowie Elementary School raised a whopping \$4,352.71 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

The fund-raising drive, "Pasta for Pennies," is a service-learning project where students learned about blood cancers and brought their spare change to donate to the cause to find cures.

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The second and third place fund-raising classes, Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Stripling, respectively, will be awarded a pizza party sponsored by the Bowie PTO.

The top three students who raised the most money were Isabella McCartney, Miranda Salinas and Jasmine Morris, all fifth-graders.

"Bowie students were very generous with their money and helped find donations for our service learning project to benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society," said Principal Jaime Lannou. "Many students felt passionate about the project because they have had experiences with family members and friends having cancer."

This the first year of the Pasta for Pennies drive at the 822-student school built in 2007 nestled in the Eva Maude subdivision. The driving force behind the school-wide fund-raiser is first-year Counselor Natalie Fikac.

She's been organizing Pasta for Pennies drives for five years now. The first four years in Bryan ISD, last year at Alamo Elementary School. The Alamo Eagles raised more than \$2,400 last year.

"I chose this organization because my father had leukemia at the time and has since passed away from it, so it is close to my heart," she said.

Mrs. Fikac said that during her guidance period, she talked to the students about service learning projects, cancer, blood cancer (leukemia), chemotherapy and bone marrow (varying the content based on ages). It lasted three weeks.

Students were given letters about the cause, as well as collection boxes to be taken home. Posters and banners were displayed around the campus with our "time honored heroes," students in Texas who have or have had leukemia.

Each class then turned in their pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters and dollars to Mrs. Fikac at least once a week. Classes turned the counting into a learning activity by sorting the change and totaling it. Students also had the opportunity to buy paper "pennies" and write their names on them, which were posted in the hallway and cafeteria.

For most students, this was the first time they had heard about blood cancers. But not all. The school has several students who have lost one or more parents or grandparents to some form of cancer. One of Bowie's students is also a cancer survivor.

"The students did an amazing job and know that the money that they raise will help to find a cure for leukemia and help those who are currently suffering from it," said Mrs. Fikac.

Since 1994, Pasta for Pennies has raised more than \$53 million nationally for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society via efforts by 3 million elementary, middle and high school students, according to Olive Garden's website.

The fundraiser helps LLS with its mission of finding a cure for leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improving the quality of life of patients and their families. LLS is "the world's largest voluntary health agency dedicated to blood cancer."

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