

Newsletter
Southeast Texas P-16 Council

Volume 2, Issue 7 July 30, 2010 Director: Steve Buser 409-880-7639
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Lamar University Downtown Campus --lower floor of the Beaumont downtown library

SETX P16 Board : <http://setxp16.org/wp/about/> **Our web site:** <http://setxp16.org/>

Plan of Action

We have been working on the groundwork this month for our 2010-2011 year programs.

One bit of good news – background first.

We are excited about the potential for the Higher Education Coordinating Board's Generation Texas campaign. The viral campaign, spearheaded by Milkshake Media (of Lance Armstrong's LiveStrong campaign – if you don't remember it, Google it) gives the current student generation a voice and an identity as they struggle through their education on the way to careers. I feel it also gives the community a vehicle to share their voices on the importance of finishing high school and continuing on in their education. I see the community serving just like the crowds along the Tour de France, cheering on the leg-weary riders gulping down breaths of elusive air. "Good going, keep it up."

I don't think students appreciate how the community pulls for them. Parents push their student proudly to excel. But, businesses, too, look eagerly to new graduates that can join their ranks and bring new ideas and new energy to their enterprises. Non-profits, governments – all sorts of enterprises need hard working, but more importantly hard-thinking new blood to keep their work strong.

Thus, **Generation Texas... Gen TX....** in Spanish, **Generación Texas.**

Stop me here before I wax too poetical.

Got the background? Let's proceed.

We were looking for an idea that we could weave into all our projects this year. Something that would get the message of GEN TX (notice the similarity to GEN X, GEN Y) and something that would keep the message burning among students.

We came up with the idea of GEN TX tshirts. We ran down prices and it seems very doable. Details are still being worked out. We're trying to find a sponsor to make the funds go further (and it would go along with the theme of community voices.)

The shirts could come in a multitude of colors – think “school colors” – and still be within our budget. Here's a look at some examples: [link](#)

21st Century Skills We visited with Mary McCoy at the LSCO library this week to get the pre-thinking going on this. She had some good ideas. Some more research needed. One idea that she brought up was getting students to create their own podcasts. That would certainly work. We could host them on our web site.

We had already been thinking about getting students to do podcasts for the Gen TX project. We could host them and we could offer to the GEN TX web site – GENTX.org The thoughts went like this: If your class (school) decides to participate we give you a pocket video camera to use. If you give us a podcast, your class keeps the camera. Those pocket video cameras are getting sophisticated. It is common to see ones shooting 720p High Definition for just south of \$100. The 1090p (probably overkill for a web cast) coming in around the \$100 mark. We could do 20 high schools for \$2,000.

At the end of it, students will have learned some pretty good skills – not the least of which is working in a team.

Full disclosure: My son, Shawn, who teaches computer technology courses at West Hardin ISD got me thinking about this several months ago. It was a slightly different topic...but that's a story for another day.

If I could round up a sponsor, this would be a slam dunk.

I am sure you have some ideas to offer on this -- send 'em to me at steve.buser@lamar.edu

P-16 Roundtables – we are continuing our **Roundtables**. We have a presentation to make next week at Orangefield ISD. Topic: The P-16 plan, the State targets, the Southeast Texas P-16.

NOTE --We going to have a meeting in a couple of weeks to get started on all the new school year's programs –**Café Con Leche, 21st Century Skills, GenTX, Roundtables, Getting the Word Out, Kids Kollege and more**. If you haven't done so already, and you

would like to play a part on this team(s), drop us a line at steve.buser@Lamar.edu to make sure you get the invite.

Teacher Workshops

I am teaching three sessions at the Region 5 Education Technology Course next week. They have some really exciting sessions planned (mine excepted, of course).

I am doing:

- Constructing a Personal Learning Network
- Getting Started with Google Earth
- Digital Photography (With my son, Shawn Buser, who teaches computer technology courses at West Hardin ISD)

I thought I would give you a little taste of what I will cover. [This isn't it](#) –it's just a taste. It's a resource page for teachers who want to use Google Earth.

<http://bit.ly/buser>

I have been a big advocate of Google Earth for a long time. It started before GE even existed. It was about the end of 1998 as I recall. I was sitting in the office at the Partnership of Southeast Texas and took a call from a prospect. He wanted to know if any land was available at an intersection out by Mauriceville. Since he was from far out of town, I ask how he keyed in on that site. He said used a mapping program (Mapquest, I seem to recall) to look at all the places in Texas where railroads crossed each other. He eliminated those in very remote areas. He then looked up large nearby towns with Economic Development Groups and started calling.

That was when I knew that doing anything that involved examining transportation, utility services, demographics, geography, logistics..... was changing forever. This was long before (in internet years) Google Earth made the scene. The first time I used Google Earth, I fell in love and it has worn out handles from being the most used tool in my drawer, ever since.

Reject doesn't mean "Stop"

Comes word from a new study that when students get a "reject" for Pell Grants because of their FAFSA form, they often think it means STOP. College financial aid advisors want them to know it means "keep trying." Often all that is missing is a signature or piece of information. For instance, researchers found that when students got a "reject" for a missing signature, if they fixed that and resubmitted it, 80.2% of them received a Pell Grant.

<http://ticas.org/files/pub/AfterFAFSA.pdf>

Hmmm.

Connected Classroom (<http://setxp16.org/wp/connected-classroom/>)

A couple of new resources (630 links now) that have been added to our **Connected Classroom** site:

Vector Clip Art --- everything vector, everything free, Vector clip art – you can size, stretch, add to, take away, change colors, colorize ... this art without loss of clarity. You can tie this together with vector editors – Aviary.com is a good one. You can add it to you tool bar and it is always available. Another good editor is Inkscape (Inkscape.org) – this is an open source SVG editor that is gaining supports. SVG images will display on most browsers, making them a good choice for your website. The Inkscape site has a link to the Open Clip Art Library (<http://www.openclipart.org/>) -- another good clip art site.

Digital History -- The internet makes it possible for students to get an inside view of much of the depth and breadth of primary sources. This site takes the student on an extraordinary tour through the real facts of history.

eGFI -- Teachers site -- Teachers site for engineering and STEM. Loaded with lesson plans, class activities, web resources, and outreach activities -- by grade level. (Okay, you caught me. I can count to two ...couple of sites... it's just that I am used to that custom of *Lagniappe*: a little something extra.)

Future Watch

After I had been out of school and working for a few years, I was one of the lucky ones in the office to get an IBM Selectric II Typewriter. It had the ability to CORRECT MISTAKES!

The old Remington-Rand manual typewriter? I hope they threw it away.

Though it had been invented a couple years before I entered the workforce, it was new technology to me. Since I was a fast, but inaccurate, typist, this was a real productivity improvement.

I was thinking about this the other day and wondering what other tools I had to learn to use along through my career. I came up with a bunch. At this point, and I am still thinking about it, I have come up with 160. Each has a special story. I share it with you when I am finished.

The reason I was thinking about this was because I read a passage that asked “students, during their work career, will have to use tools that have not been invented. How do we prepare them for that?”

Then I really got to thinking.

- Take an 8th grader. Let's say she is 14-year-old.

- Let's assume she goes on to earn a bachelor's degree and enters the workforce on her 22nd birthday in 2018.
- Today, people usually work to about 65-years-old. That would be 43 years for our new entrant.
- However, people are living longer and longer.
- So, let's assume she stays in the workforce until she is 70 years old.
- She retires, then, in 2066.

How do you prepare a student of today with the skills to learn new tools and techniques that will be introduced in, say, 2064?

Geek Time

What is the last institution you would expect to publish its annual report online – I mean really online –in one of the new online magazine format with hyperlinks all over it? A Library? That's just what I thought. Whew, we really think alike. I ran across the Springfield Township Virtual Library the other day. Lots of cool concepts (If are still into website that don't make noise and staid columns –“ just the facts, ma'm”, I don't think you'll take much refuge in [“the more traditional site.”](#) Its has the same stuff just in columns. Un-staid columns, I might add.

What caught my eye was the virtual annual report. Then next, my eye captured that it had been published on the web site Issu.com -- a self-publishing site. But what caught my eye most, were the words next to that—“more High School.” I didn't know what that meant, so I did what I usually do under such circumstances, I clicked the link. It opened to a search page in Issue.com. The search had already been done for me. It was a search on the key words “High School.” It took me a while to figure what that was about. Then it hit me -- 100 pages, at 10 links to a page --1,000 publications related to high school.

I paged through a few pages of links and found high school weekly newspapers –dozens of them (and they never have to sell adds to buy the newsprint). High school magazines, high school catalogs, graduation programs, high school catalogs, career guides, sports schedules (with ads—bet that was pure profit), old year books (I guess they were scanned in),school calendars, literary magazines, school forms,brochures , competitions, studies high schools did on elearning and other topics, reunion programs, high school statistics, a teachers' guide, hacker high school lesson plans -- lessons about computers and the internet, a guide to learn high school lacrosse, alumni magazines, seniorpictures pages from very old yearbooks (I hope this doesn't catch on, or I am in big trouble), a lot of viewbooks and much more. Much of it wasn't really related to high schools.

At this point, what would you have done? That is exactly what I did. I went up to the search line and entered “high school” –just like that in quotes. I still brought up 1,000

answers. I was now thinking that 1,000 is the most links it would return in a search, because now, almost everything was relevant.

You don't have to say it, because I already did that, too. I went to the search line and entered "high school" texas – just like that. 1,000 answers again.

Other local links I found: [Orange Community](#) Profile, [Silsbee Be Fall Sports Section](#), [MidCounty Madness](#), [Silsbee Bee Hardin County Sesquicentennial](#), [Orange County EDC magazine](#)

You can use any of the links above to go straight to Issu.com search page. But, go through [the library](#) – **it may just spark your imagination.**

Spread the word

This newsletter was sent by the Southeast Texas P-16 Council to educators, school board members, elected officials, businesses and others interested in education in Southeast Texas.

Our mailing address is P.O. Box 10008, Beaumont, TX 77710.

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Want to be part?

We are currently seeking volunteers to work on the various P-16 program if you are interested call us at 409-880-7639 or email steve.buser@lamar.edu
