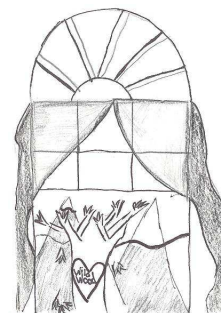


**WILDWOOD WINDOW**  
**February 2010**  
**The Newsletter of**  
**Wildwood Elementary School**



Dear Wildwood Families,

Everyone in grades 1-6 received report cards on Friday. Please take advantage of this careful report of your child's progress to review and celebrate achievements as well as set some goals for the second half of the year. Both grades and comments are important for you to get a full picture of the year so far. This is the second "official" family-teacher communication of the year, with the first being the family-teacher conference in the fall. There will be an "optional" spring conference followed by the final report card in June. Note that many teachers (including our PE, Art, and Music teachers) have opted to pilot a new "Powerschool" report-card. Please read and keep the report card and **sign and return the envelope with your comments**. This not only lets us know that you received it, but allows us to re-use the envelope in the spring.

Trying to sum up a child's performance in numbers on 2 pages can't give you all the information you want. Our system of report cards, conferences, collections of student work, assessments, project evaluations and observations paints a full picture of your child's progress and achievement. Informal family-teacher communication happens daily through a variety of media- notes, class letters, e-mails, conversations and conferences. If parents/guardians would like to meet with a teacher at other times, please make an appointment directly with the teacher or through Ms. Champoux (362-1400) in the school office. Tracking attendance is another important source of data- please review this on the report card. Frequent tardies and absences can jeopardize your child's success in school.

Please remember; if your child is having a problem at school, please discuss it *first* with your child's teacher. The classroom teacher will have unique insight about your child as a member of the classroom community.

If your child has an issue in the classroom and you are not able to resolve it with the classroom teacher, then set up an appointment to discuss the issue with me.

Last week, you also received our School Council's parent survey of school climate. Please complete this survey and return in the provided envelope to provide us important information about areas of strength and challenge for ourselves as an institution.

Sincerely,

Matt

## Dates to Remember

February 15-19 – Winter Recess

February 23<sup>rd</sup> – School Committee 7:00 p.m.

February 25<sup>th</sup> – Lunar New Year Celebration 9:50 a.m.

( Please see the attached brochure)

February 25<sup>th</sup> - “Meet and Greet” Evening Tour (for New Families coming to WW next year) 6:00 p.m.

February 26<sup>th</sup> Principal’s Coffee/Visitor’s Day- 8:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon

## **Thank you, PTO!**

**The Wildwood PTO has purchased the following new materials to support Science learning here at Wildwood.**

- **A classroom set of Brock Magi-scopes. These kid-friendly microscopes work for viewing whole objects in close detail as well as for looking at prepared slides of cells, tissues, and micro-life. The purchase included extra lenses to allow for views magnified 20x, 40x, and 100x power. Simple to use, effective for children K through 6, and 100% guaranteed against breakage.**
- **Materials to update the Wood Unit taught in kindergarten to Wood and Paper, including an updated teacher's binder with new investigations, multiple copies of the reader matched to the lessons, a teacher-training DVD, and all the materials needed for the hands-on investigations.**
- **Extra materials for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade science units, New Plants and Pebbles Sand and Silt. The Brassica fastplants studied in the New Plants Unit take five weeks to grow from seed to maturity. The purchase of 2 more grow lights allows each 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom to have their own Brassica growing station. The other welcome addition to grade 2 Science is a set of 24 copies of the reader which goes with the Pebbles Sand and Silt investigations.**

**On behalf of the children and teachers here at Wildwood, thank you!**

**Pat Cahill  
Science Coordinator  
Amherst Public Schools**

**Wildwood School  
Spring 2010  
MCAS Testing Schedule**

| <b>March 22-April 12<br/>English Language Arts- Grades 3-6</b>                       |  |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday                                   | Thursday  | Friday   |
| March 22<br>Grade 3 ELA<br>9:00-10:30  | 23<br>Grade 4 Long<br>Composition                                | 24<br>Grade 3 ELA<br>9:00-10:30             | 25<br>Grade 6 ELA<br>10:30                              | 26<br>Grade 6 ELA<br>10:30   |
| 29<br>Grade 4 ELA<br>9:00-10:30  | 30<br>Grade 4 ELA<br>9:00-10:30<br>Grade 5 ELA<br>9:00-10:30     | 31<br>Science<br>Fair                       | April 1<br>Grade 5 ELA<br>9:00-10:30                    | 2<br><b>NO<br/>SCHOOL<br/>GOOD<br/>FRIDAY</b><br><br>MCAS ALT.<br>Deadline |
| 5  | 6  | 7<br>Grade 4<br>Composition<br>Make-Up Date | 8 <b>UMASS<br/>FIELD TRIP<br/>Grades 3,5&amp;<br/>6</b> | 9  |
| 12   |  |   |   |  |
| <b>May 10-27<br/>Math-grades 3-6<br/>Sci/Tech./Eng.&amp; well as Hist/SS grade 5</b> |  |   |   |  |
| Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday                                   | Thursday  | Friday   |
| May 10   | 11<br>Grade 5 Math<br>9:00-10:30                                 | 12<br>Grade 5 Math<br>9:00-10:30            | 13<br>Grade 3 Math<br>9:00-10:30                        | 14<br>Grade 3 Math<br>9:00-10:30   |
| May 17<br>Grade 4<br>Math<br>9:00-10:30  | 10:30<br>Grade 6<br>Math 10:30<br><br>Grade 4 Math<br>9:00-10:30 | 19<br>Grade 6<br>Math 10:30                 | 20<br>Grade 5<br>Science<br>9:00-10:30                  | 21<br>Grade 5<br>Science<br>9:00-10:30                                     |
| 24   | 25   | 26  | 27  |  |



**Dear Families and Friends,**

### **Sign of Spring?**

While it looks and feels like winter outdoors, we have a bit of spring in the Wildwood Library. A few weeks ago, Ms. Cahill, district science teacher, discovered that the pond water that she had collected in the fall now had four good-sized tadpoles in it. She has moved the tank into the library so that we can all watch them grow into frogs. They are quite the topic of interest and they have many excited students visiting them every day. Did you know that tadpoles don't eat as they transition into frogs because their bodies get their nourishment by absorbing their tails? I've been reading books about tadpoles and frogs with the **Kindergarten** and **1<sup>st</sup> grade** classes so we'll know what our tadpoles are up to. We're hoping to return the frogs to their home in the pond on Strong Street sometime in April. Stop by and visit our living first signs of spring.

### **Library Research**

Research projects are in full swing in the library. The last of the **fifth grade** classes finishing up their library research projects on notable African Americans. They have received instruction in how to take notes, keep bibliographies, cross-reference their notes with their information sources, write compelling opening and closing statements and present their reports orally along with their visual or audio aides. Each class comes to the library daily for two weeks to learn the research process.

**Sixth grade** classes have been coming to the library in 8 week blocks of time, three times per week as they research famous world structures. Ms. Ronning's class is presently outlining their notes in preparation for writing their research reports. Each student will ultimately choose a way in which to make his/her final presentation combining text with visuals. The sixth grade projects build upon the skills learned through the fifth grade projects while adding more depth to the research process. Students should be more than ready for the challenges of research in the Middle School.

### **Library Classes**

**Fourth grade** classes have been honing their map skills in the library. In the past few weeks students have learned how to: read maps by using legends, locate places through grid squares or coordinates, interpret physical maps, and many other map skills.

**Third graders** have been learning about various legendary characters. So far we've read about William Tell, Robin Hood, and King Arthur. In honor of President's Day, we are presently reading an excellent account of Abraham Lincoln called Stand Tall, Abe Lincoln by Judith St. George.

In **Second grade**, we've been reading tales from the Middle East including some of the Arabian Night stories. Right now, we're taking a departure from ancient tales and are reading a true story called Nubs: The True Story of a Mutt, a Marine and a Miracle. This is the happy-ending story of a Marine and a dog who befriend one another in Iraq.

### **MCBA- Massachusetts Children's Book Award**

After we return from February vacation, students in grades 4-6 will vote for their favorite from among 25 books nominated for the MCBA. They started reading the books in September and everyone who has read at least five is eligible to vote. Our results will be sent to the state coordinator and in the spring we will find out who is the 2010 winner. You will find a list of this year's nominees as well as the state winners since 1976 on the Wildwood Library website at <http://www.arps.org/ww/Library> under the Literature tab.

### **Book Care**

As the snow starts to melt, please be sure your child carries library books to and from school in his/her backpack. We've already started seeing some water-damaged books that have been dropped in the melting snow. Sometimes children have leaky juice boxes or mushy bananas in their backpacks that also damage books. Sometimes it's safer to have a plastic zip-lock in the backpack for transporting library books.

### **Responsibility**

Children are often disappointed when they haven't returned their library books and can't borrow another. Often, a student will tell me that his/her mother/father forgot to put the books in their backpack. I always tell them that it is their responsibility to remember that. So don't worry parents, I have your back!

### **Book Selection by Students**

This year, I have especially noticed the younger children choosing books that their parents will read to them, rather than picture books that they might look at by themselves. It's wonderful that so many parents are reading to their children, it allows children to experience more challenging books, ones they could never read by themselves. On the flip side, let your child know if what they are choosing is more than you want to read. I tend to trust them if they tell me, "My Dad loves to read Secrets of Droon."

Have a wonderful February vacation. It's a great time to stay in and read.

Elaine Donoghue, Wildwood Librarian

## Art Studio News

### February 2010

Here is what students have been doing in the art studio:

**Students in grades K-3 have been learning about the arts of East Asia.** Kindergarteners were introduced to the bamboo brush and ink. Using our ink paintings, we made Chinese lanterns which are hanging in the hallway outside the computer room.

**First graders** made noisemakers for the upcoming Lunar New Year Parade. They practiced with bamboo brush and ink, painting bamboo and other forms from nature. They also learned some Chinese characters, which they drew on their noisemakers.

**Second graders** just completed lunar landscapes. Working from observation of plants and from their imaginations, they painted with brush and ink. **Third graders** learned how to paint dragons using special brush strokes. All of the children's work is on display throughout Wildwood.

Sadly, one of the most important folk art museums in Haiti was destroyed in the earthquake, and only a fraction of the collection survived the damage. **Third, fourth and fifth graders** are learning about the beautiful tradition of Haitian folk painting.

Looking at the paintings gave students a different vision of Haiti and its natural beauty. We looked at many examples of these paintings, and discussed their content and style. We are in the process of developing our own paintings inspired by this beautiful work.

As part of our art history/ancient cultures study, **sixth graders** are working on plaster relief sculptures inspired by ancient Egyptian art. After looking at and discussing Egyptian art, we are making drawings either taken directly from wall paintings and reliefs, or by creating our own drawings in Egyptian style.

Everyone is working with hieroglyphics as part of this art making process. We transfer our drawings to styrofoam plates, and then we pour plaster in to the plates, forming a relief, which will then be painted.

We are fortunate to have a lovely new student teacher in the art studio. Below is a message from Ms. Kotecki:

Hello!

My name is Anna (Ms. Kotecki) and I will be the art student teacher for the spring. I am a Hampshire College student who has a particular interest in multicultural art education. We have a great few months ahead and I am looking forward to working with and getting to know everyone throughout my time here!

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION NEWS

**A big *Thank You* to parents who help students remember to wear sneakers to weekly PE. Any type of athletic shoe with tie or velcro will keep feet healthy for a lifetime of fitness.**

**First Lady Michelle Obama has concerns about obesity as her top priority, so stay active for 60 minutes every day!**

**A focus on Winter Olympics sports have helped us remember to exercise daily. Trick skills of juggling, stilt walking, and riding bobsleds (4 wheeled scooters) have us imagining the opening ceremonies. Games on scooters and with basketballs have us thinking hard about the ideals of being Fair, Safe, Present and Respectful.**

### GRADE LEVEL ACTIVITIES

**Grades 5 and 6: Pedometers**

**Grade 4: Target Heart Rate**

**Grade 3: Sweat and Heart rate Workouts**

**Grade 2: Upcoming Heart Day**

**Grade 1: Healthy Lungs**

**Kindergarten: Yoga in every class**

**Elizabeth Fernandez O'Brien**

**362-1431**

**obriene@arps.org**



**An effective way for Wildwood students and families to help Haiti this week!**

**Collection boxes in the front hallway under the "Wildwood Cares" bulletin board are a place to donate critical items that are most useful at this time. Key items include:**

- 1. batteries (all sizes)**
- 2. Ensure and Pedialite**
- 3. first aid supplies (all kinds)**
- 4. water purification tablets (available at Dick's sporting goods)**

**These will be part of a truck shipment going directly to Haiti via small planes leaving early next week. Donations are also being collected Saturday and Sunday 2/6 and 2/7/10 at 74 N. Whitney Street from 9 a.m.- 6 p.m.**

**A number of Wildwood classes including the 6<sup>th</sup> entire 4<sup>th</sup> grades teams, are undertaking other efforts, including a penny drive and other fund raisers. For further information about this week's drive for email Wildwood parent Marciaelena Garcia [mgarcia@jonesrealtors.com](mailto:mgarcia@jonesrealtors.com)**



## **Let's Stay Connected!**

**Amherst Public Schools**

**Parent/Guardian-School Connection: Spring 2010 Meetings for  
Parents and Guardians of Elementary School Children with  
School Personnel**

***\*\*Childcare provided \*\*Spanish Translation Provided***

***\*\*Other Translation Provided Upon Request***

***\*\*Call Ms. Mildred Martinez 362-1871 with any questions***

***Wednesday, March 3, 2010 6:30-8:00 PM*** Health and Well Being Fair  
for Families of Students in Grades **PreK-2**, Crocker Farm School

***\*FUN ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS AND THEIR PARENTS/GUARDIANS***

***\*SNACKS \*PRIZES \*HANDOUTS \*SHARING OF IDEAS***

***Friday, March 5, 2010 9:00-10:00 AM***

***"How can we best support our kids?" Meeting for Parents and Guardians  
of Students PreK-6, Professional Development Center, Middle School***

***Thursday, May 13, 2010 7:00-8:00 PM*** "Celebrating This Year and  
Looking Forward to Next Year" Meeting for Parents and Guardians of  
Students PreK-6, Professional Development Center, Middle School



## **¡Sigamos Conectados!** **Escuelas Públicas de Amherst**

**Conexión de Padres/Encargados y las Escuelas: Reuniones para Padres y Encargados de Niños de Escuela Elemental y Personal de las Escuelas**

**\*\*Habrá cuidado de niños \*\*Traducción en Español Disponible**

**\*\*Traducción en otros Idiomas Disponible si es Necesario**

**\*\*Llame a Mildred Martínez, 362-1871 si tiene preguntas**

***Miércoles, 3 de marzo del 2010 6:30-8:00 PM Feria de Salud y Bienestar para Familias de Niños de PreK-2, Escuela Crocker Farm***

***\*ACTIVIDADES PARA NIÑOS Y SUS PADRES/ENCARGADOS***

***\*REFRIGERIOS \*PREMIOS \*LECTURAS \*COMPARTIR IDEAS***

***Viernes, 5 de marzo del 2010 9:00-10:00 AM “¿Como podemos apoyar a nuestros niños? Reunión para Familias de Niños en grados PreK-6, Centro de Desarrollo Profesional, Escuela Intermedia***

***Jueves, 13 de mayo del 2010 7:00-8:00 PM “Celebremos este Año y Planifiquemos el Próximo” Reunión para Familias de Niños en grados PreK-6, Centro de Desarrollo Profesional, Escuela Intermedia***