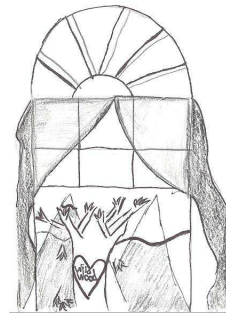


# **WILDWOOD WINDOW**

## **January 2010**

### **The Newsletter of Wildwood Elementary School**



Dear Wildwood Families,

Happy New Year! The students and staff returned from their break enthusiastic and energized. Students and teachers quickly got back to work in their classrooms. Our first week of 2010 was a very productive, successful, and challenging one, with students' learning on display, at many levels.

The beginning of the week back was rich with many learning opportunities for classroom teachers. Wildwood School was honored and excited to host Teacher's College presenter, Shanna Schwartz. Miss Schwartz worked with teachers from Wildwood and other schools on the Writing Workshop Model. Teachers planned the implementation of new writing units, and then modeled writing instruction in the framework of lab site visits for grades K-2. Teachers from grades K-5 were invited to participate in a series of mini workshops on Wednesday afternoon. The lab site visits underscored the richness and value of teachers learning alongside students in the classroom.

The annual Wildwood Geo Bee was held on Tuesday morning with several finalists entangled in a suspenseful and challenging contest. The teachers, students, and participants sat riveted as the questions provided by the National Geographic Society were fired off and deliberated over. The winner of the contest was Solomon Rueschemeyer-Bailey, with Klaas Meinke close behind. Congratulations to both of these students for their hard work, to all the other participants and to those who put in time and effort to prepare for this exciting and challenging contest. A special thanks to Elaine Donoghue, school librarian, and former Assistant Principal Karen Lowe for their efforts in organizing this event.

Report Cards will be coming home on with students on January 29. Accompanying the report card will be a Wildwood School Climate Survey, which can be returned inside the report card envelope for your convenience. We strongly encourage you to take part in this opportunity to provide us with feedback, so that we can focus on areas of needed improvement. More detailed instructions will be provided on the form.

As we shiver in the midst of the frigid cold winter weather, we recognize that many students come to school without the clothing necessary to keep them warm and dry for recess. We are looking for donations of clean or used mittens, gloves, boots, snow pants, hats, and coats to distribute to students. On another clothing matter, our lost and found bin outside of the middle dining room is bursting with an assortment of unclaimed shoes, boots, and clothing. Please stop by and take a moment to look through the bin to locate missing items.

As always, we welcome your involvement, comments, and suggestions. We are all working for the betterment of our students' academic, social, and emotional growth.

Most Sincerely,  
Lisa Bailly  
Assistant Principal

### Dates to Remember

- Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>- School Council Meeting 7:30 am
- Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup>- Martin Luther King Assembly- 1:30 pm
- Friday, January 15<sup>th</sup> - NO SCHOOL- Teacher Curriculum Day
- Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>- NO SCHOOL ~ Martin Luther King Day
- Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>- Amherst School Committee 7:00 pm
- Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>- Community Coffee 8:30-9:30  
Wildwood School Tours 9:30
- Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>- Daytime Band and Orchestra Concert  
Amherst School Committee 7:00 pm
- Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>- Family Wildwood Band and Orchestra  
Concert 7:00 pm
- Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup>- Report Cards go home
- Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> PTO Meeting, 8:30 AM

*MCAS SCHEDULE*

**Wildwood School  
Spring 2010  
MCAS Testing Schedule**

<b>March 22-April 12 English Language Arts- Grades 3-6</b>				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
March 22 <b>Grade 3</b> <b>ELA</b> 9:00-10:30	23 <b>Grade 4</b> <b>Long</b> <b>Composition</b>	24 <b>Grade 3</b> <b>ELA</b> 9:00-10:30	25 <b>Grade 6</b> 10:30	26 <b>Grade 6</b> 10:30
29 <b>Grade 4</b> <b>ELA</b> 9:00-10:30	30 <b>Grade 4 ELA</b> 9:00-10:30	31 <b>Grade 5</b> 9:00-10:30	April 1 <b>Grade 5</b> 9:00-10:30	2 <b>NO SCHOOL</b>  <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>  <b>MCAS ALT.</b> <b>Deadline</b>
5	6	7 <b>Grade 4</b> <b>Composition</b> <b>Make-Up</b> <b>Date</b>	8 <b>UMASS</b> <b>FIELD</b> <b>TRIP</b> <b>Grades</b> <b>3,5&amp; 6</b>	9

**Art Studio News**  
**January 2010**

**Happy New Year to all our Wildwood families!**

We have been busy in the studio with some exciting activities:

As part of the **sixth grade's** Ancient Cultures exploration, we had art historian, Dr. David Levine come and talk to us about how art historians find clues in works of art to determine their history and meaning. This month we will be visiting the Mt. Holyoke College Art Museum for a special program on ancient cultures. In the studio students made art inspired by the early *Greeks*: we made scratchboards and then sculpted "amphoras" (special containers) out of clay. We learned about both red on black and black on red styles of pottery glazing, and about the content of Greek figurative art.

Now we are embarking on an exploration of Egyptian art.

**Fifth graders** just completed a study of African American painters as we prepare for Black History Month. Each class was given a small piece of a large painting (in reproduction) to copy into an enlarged form. We put all the pieces together to create a large copy of a famous piece of art. We recreated one painting by **William Johnson**, one by **Romare Bearden**, and a woodcut of **Martin Luther King Jr.** Look for them on display soon.

**Fourth graders** are learning about the amazing African American quilters of **Gee's Bend**, Alabama. These women work with recycled fabrics to create dazzling quilts that are patterned but also improvisational. Our students created paper quilt squares inspired by the *Gee's Bend* use of improvisation. They are on display in the fourth grade hallway.

**Third graders** just completed dragon noisemakers in preparation for the Lunar New Year Parade in February. They enjoyed learning new skills like working with plaster, painting and collage. Next we will be working on a combined art and poetry project with third grade teachers in celebration of Black History Month.

**First and second graders** are about to begin some Asian brush painting as we prepare for the Lunar New Year Parade. Each year we build on the skills we learned the year before in our Asian painting techniques.

## Wildwood Geography Bee



On January 5, 2010 Wildwood School held its school championship round of the National Geography Bee. The twelve finalists were: Giau Diep, Frances Duncan, Daniel Feldman, Oscar Frasier, Ben Jackson, Ian Kaye, Klaas Meinke, Solomon Rueschemeyer-Bailey, Ben Ryan, Daniel Shaw-Vincente, and Sasha Yakub. Third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade students, teachers, and families of the contestants attended the event.

After a record number of nail-biting rounds of oral and written questions, the school champion was determined to be Solomon Rueschemeyer-Bailey who will now advance to the next level of competition, a written exam, in order to qualify for the state competition. Klaas Meinke was the first runner-up and until the dramatic conclusion, was neck-in-neck with Solomon.

Congratulations to all of the students who participated in the Geography Bee. Making it to the rank of finalists is a huge accomplishment. Thank you to all of the teachers in grades 4-6 who prepared and quizzed their students in the preliminary rounds. The main goal of the Geo Bee is truly the knowledge and understanding of the world that we hope our students have gained.

This year, Ms. Lowe, our former assistant principal, returned as a volunteer to help coordinate the Bee with me. We are both thrilled that the Geography Bee has become such an important focus of our school. Karen Lowe and I are happy to have been the coordinators over the past fifteen years. It is wonderful to hear conversations in the hall about geography and to have students flock to the library to borrow atlases, practice questions, and various other study materials so that they can prepare on their own. On the day of the Championship, there was great excitement in the audience. You would think everyone was attending a sporting event, but how gratifying to see hard work and academic achievement being admired by our students. After the Bee, several students were heard to tell their friends that next year, they would be up on the stage. Let's all encourage that motivation.

By the way, the winning question was: *The Vakhn Corridor, a narrow stretch of land separating Tajikistan from Pakistan, is part of which country?* (You'll find the answer on the WW Library webpage: <http://www.arps.org/ww/Library/index.html>)

*Elaine Donoghue, Librarian*

*Teachers College Jump-Starts Wildwood's New Year  
By Rachmana Santorelli, Language Arts Resource Teacher*

Shanna Schwartz, a long-time staff developer for Teachers College, provided a three day intensive training at Wildwood School in the teaching of writing workshop. All teachers who work with Kindergarten, first and second grade children, including those from General Education Intervention, English Language Education, and Special Education from Marks Meadow and Pelham School joined us in this district-wide training.

Teachers met by grade levels for two hour blocks. During some of that time Shanna guided teachers in developing a grade level unit of study for January. These units were based on a writing genre, built upon previous work teachers have done in the class, and included specific goals based on the Composition Strand of the frameworks. Designing these units with Shanna will help teachers with future unit planning as they work toward aligning the literacy curriculum.

By now you may be imagining a room full of teachers sitting at desks taking notes and planning for three days. But, how many of you had children coming home recently telling you that a whole bunch of teachers came into their classroom to learn from *them* by watching as they worked in their classroom? Shanna delivered some of her most important teaching to teachers by using the classroom as a 'labsite' for instruction. She modeled clear, explicit minilessons along with several workshop teaching methods that help engage students, allowing them to become focused, active participants in their own learning.

On Wednesday afternoon, 44 teachers from grades K-5 across the district attended her three afternoon workshops. Topics included "Making Your Teaching Stick", "Writing Toolkits", and "Mentor Texts". Teachers were buzzing with excitement and eager to return to their classrooms invigorated and ready for the new year.

We're delighted that Shanna will be returning in April for a two-day visit.