

# **Wildwood Elementary School**



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Amherst, MA 01002**

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**Matthew Behnke, M.Ed., Principal**

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

May 28, 2010

It is difficult to believe that the school year is drawing to a close. It seems like just yesterday that I saw the eager, smiling faces of our students as they arrived for the first day of school. Another school year has come and nearly gone, and your children have all grown in so many ways; they are ready to move up to meet new teachers, discover new friends, and embrace learning new ideas, concepts, and skills. At this time in the school year, first and foremost for the students, they are ready for summer adventures!

Attached to this document you will find the results of our School Climate that was distributed in mid-winter. As you may recall, parents and guardians were asked for their input in the areas of communication, learning environment, safety and well-being, demographics, and events. We had a good response, and Katie McDermott and her intern, Claire Marks, processed the data and compiled it into a report. They have done an excellent job, and their work to support us in this endeavor is very much appreciated! The information provided through parents' feedback will be addressed in next year's School Improvement Plan.

The end of the year brings a multitude of events, field trips, and culminating activities which extend and enrich the learning and units of study at the various grade levels, as well as celebrating and bringing closure to the Wildwood classroom communities established throughout the school year. I would like to share some of these exciting and fun-filled activities with you.

- Kindergarten students enjoyed a visit to the Magic Wings Butterfly Conservatory as part of their Science life cycle unit of study.
- In first grade, students are in the midst of an embryology unit and are carefully tending to eighteen eggs in each classroom. We are all excitedly anticipating the hatching of the chicks!
- Both kindergarten and first grade students were invited to the Amherst Regional Middle School to watch plays performed by the budding actors and actresses of the Middle School Drama Club.
- Second grade students visited the Jones Library to learn all about it and all received a library card. In addition, second grade students will be visiting the Mill River for a day of learning and fun.
- In third grade, students and teachers will enjoy a day of activities at Look Park in Northampton.
- Fourth grade will take on the challenge of a Ropes Course courtesy of the Amherst Police Department.
- Historic Deerfield was visited by fifth grade students to extend their learning about local history and fifth grade social studies units of study.
- Sixth grade students will take a field trip to Boston to visit the Science Museum to attend the Omni and 3-D theaters, and take a ride on the Duck Boats on the Charles River.

Wildwood School has lots to celebrate! Wildwood students participated in the annual Hoops and Jumps schedule of events orchestrated by physical education teacher, Elizabeth Fernandez-O'Brien to support healthy lifestyle habits in support of the American Heart Association. Students that will be new to Wildwood School next year in grades three through five from Marks Meadow, Crocker Farm, and Fort River came to join in the fun and exercise. Wildwood students raised \$1,512 for the American Heart Association geared towards supporting the prevention of heart attack and stroke. Wildwood School also recognizes and commends the accomplishments of the Latino students in kindergarten and sixth grade who were honored on Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at the Fourth Annual Latino Achievement Night for effort, leadership, progress, academic achievement, and community spirit. Students awarded certificates in one or more of these areas : Nalaysha Feliciano, Nathaniel Mills, Andre SettBatista, Felipe Rodriguez, Fernando Artiga, Francisco Juanes, and Sabina Solorzano. The auditorium was packed with proud families and friends, and featured some wonderful entertainment. A big thank you to Dr. Marta Guevara, Director of Student Services, for organizing and supporting this event. One final piece of great news is that parents and the community supported our school through the Stop and Shop Rewards Program, and Wildwood School received \$1, 356.60. This program is one that the Wildwood PGO helps to organize and works with the school in deciding how to distribute the funds. We extend our appreciation to the Wildwood PGO for all that they do for the school.

In preparing for the redistricting transition, we have had many planned events and structures in place to support our students and families at Wildwood and throughout the district. Students that will be attending Crocker Farm or Fort River in the fall have been visiting their new schools to meet the staff, tour the buildings, and ask questions. In addition, our Guidance staff, Naihsin Kuo and Melissa Lake, have been spending time with these students to process their questions and concerns about their new schools. Students that will be new to Wildwood in the fall have also been coming for similarly structured visits, and have expressed their excitement and enthusiasm about this change in schools. We recognize the need to also support the students who will remain, and are planning some end of the year events to help them with this transition. We will be celebrating our time together as a whole through an end-of-year assembly on June 11<sup>th</sup> as well as grade level and classroom activities and projects. These last few weeks have been bittersweet as we acknowledge that some of our staff, families, and friends will be leaving Wildwood, but we are confident that everyone is ready to move forward to forge new learning communities.

Have a safe and restful summer!

Sincerely,

Lisa Desjarlais

### **Upcoming Dates to Remember:**

- **June 1<sup>st</sup>: PTO meeting, 8:30 am, Band and Orchestra Concert, 10:30 am & 7:30 am**
- **June 2<sup>nd</sup>: Staff Appreciation Luncheon, sponsored by the Wildwood PGO**
- **June 3<sup>rd</sup>: Susan Radtke's class to Ropes Course**
- **June 4<sup>th</sup>: Gioia Woods's class to Ropes Course**
- **June 8<sup>th</sup>: Sixth Grade- Boston Trip**  
**Doshisha students visit, families invited for 2:00 assembly**
- **June 9<sup>th</sup>: Bus/Van Driver Appreciation Breakfast, 8:45**
- **June 9<sup>th</sup>: Family Picnic, 5:30-7:30 pm**
- **June 10<sup>th</sup>: Look Park-Third Grade Trip**  
**Mary Lambert's Class to Ropes Course**
- **June 11<sup>th</sup>: Second Grade trip to Mill River**
- **June 15<sup>th</sup>: Grade 6 Graduation, 9:30 am**
- **June 15<sup>th</sup>: Amherst School Committee Meeting 7:00 pm, ARHS**
- **June 17<sup>th</sup>: Last Day of School!!**

**Arts Event for Haiti Raises More than \$1700 in Donations and Supplies  
Thank You Wildwood Community!**

Wednesday evening, April 28, family and friends of Wildwood gathered together in a joint effort to help the victims of the earthquake in Haiti in a fundraiser for the local chapter of the AFYA Foundation.

The evening began with an invitation for visitors to take a gallery walk through the school to view the Haiti-inspired art work. The colorful displays, carefully hung by art teacher, Ms Rivera, intern Anna Kotecki and parent helper Anna Butler, illustrated the impressive and varied talents of Wildwood student artists.

As they began the tour, parents and friends were also invited to add to the school-wide donations from the supply drive coordinated by ELE teacher, Sylvia Fisher, via student donations throughout the school. These supplies will be shipped Mariaelena Garcia to the St. Claire's Rectory and Orphanage in Port Au Prince, Haiti overseen by the "What If" Foundation and donated to the new school now under construction.

In the gymnasium, visitors purchased student art work created especially for the event by first through third graders. Students in first grade made colorful "tap-tap" bus sculptures, second grade artists created miniature "Haiti houses" and third graders made sculptures inspired by what they saw in the Haitian folk paintings they studied. In addition, 2<sup>nd</sup> graders produced and sold a special CD entitled C-4 Sounds for Haiti featuring student readings, plus Haitian artist in residence Ayizan Sanon singing "For the Children" and Mr. Silverstone, James Robinson and Ms. Dunbar playing the rock and roll song "C' mon Let's Dance Some More Additional copies are available for sale in the main office.

Another special aspect of the evening was a silent auction of items provided by staff and families. Donations included craft items, music CDs and artwork made by staff, decorative plates from Morocco, jade from China, and baskets from Haiti. Traditional Haitian food was donated by Mariaelena and by Shavahn Best and served by her daughter Isabela and friends Julie and Rosie.

The evening's program began with student representatives from various classes describing their fundraising efforts. These efforts included the following:

- Kindergarten students made Haitian-inspired tap-tap buses that were donated and sold. First grade students studied some of the Caribbean islands and fruits indigenous to those islands in relation to Haiti. Collected items for backpacks and talked about the social implications of students in Haiti that did not have school supplies.
- Second graders collected and donated batteries, pediatric nutrition supplements, food items, school items and medical supplies. Fourth graders sponsored a penny drive and raised money for Hope for Haiti collecting some \$573.00 dollars. Fifth graders donated and sold art-inspired Haitian paintings.
- Sixth graders held a penny drive for Hope for Haiti raised nearly \$1,000 dollars.
- ELL students grew tomato seedlings and made origami to sell

Performances followed with Ms. Wills' students reading Haitian-inspired poetry. Then Ayizan Sanon performed a musical set, at one point accompanied by Mr. Silverstone on guitar. The finale of the evening was a dynamic dance performance by Afro Cuban drum and dance troupe Grupo Folklórico Palo Santo of which P.E. teacher, Ms. Fernandez-O'Brien is a member.

Warm thanks are due to the many who helped make the evening a success, including our patient and helpful custodians, eager student volunteers who collected money from sales, Ms. Rivera, who initiated the project, and the rest of the organizing committee including staff members Mr. Benke, Ms. Kotecki, Goia Woods, Kathryn Runyan, Elizabeth Fernandez O'Brien, Sherril Willis, Michael Silverstone, Sylvia Fisher, Jane Costello, Melissa Lake, Carlos Turriago and parents including Marielana Garcia and Shavahn Best.



Dear Parent/Guardian:

As the end of the school year nears, it is time to take a moment and mark your calendars to pick up your child's medication(s) from school.

Our District Policy states that we cannot store medications at school over the summer and if not picked up within two days after the start of summer vacation, they will be destroyed.

Should you choose for your child to have his/her medication available at school in the upcoming school year, please sign the parent/guardian consent on the enclosed form and have your child's healthcare provider complete their section.

Your healthcare provider may fax the completed medication order to the nurse office at 413-549-9520; or you can return the form along with your child's medication at the start of the school year.

Thank you and enjoy your summer.

Health Services

# Art Studio News

May 2010

Thank you Wildwood for coming out to support  
"Child to Child"!

We raised \$1700 and the book bag items  
are on their way to Haiti!

It was wonderful to have a chance to showcase the childrens' art school-wide. Part of our exhibit will travel to the superintendent's office next week, so if you haven't had a chance to see our Haiti inspired art exhibit, please stop by soon!

## Here's a quick summary of art activity in the studio:

**Kindergarteners** are learning about texture and creating texture relief prints using styrofoam and all sorts of other materials.

**First graders** are learning how to weave on cardboard looms.

**Second graders** began an architecture unit. We will be making collagraph prints inspired by architectural forms and imaginings.

**Third graders** are weaving on round looms they made on paper plates, and learning about color theory.

**Fourth graders** are involved in the designing of "body maps" with personal symbols and figure silhouettes. We are using a dotting technique found in Aboriginal "dreamings", which are painted art works that are a kind of spiritual map, full of hidden meaning and symbolism.

**Fifth graders** are working on Identity Boxes, which are two and three dimensional creations that explore how we appear on the outside vs. how we feel on the inside. Some artists that inspired this work are Joseph Cornell and contemporary artist Betye Saar.

**Sixth graders** are learning how to make a reduction woodcut, which involves carving away from a block and printing, then carving more and printing again.

**Don't wait! Apply for FREE Head Start or Early Head Start Now!**

**Child Care/Preschool/Home-Visiting:** The Parent-Child Development Center, serving families with children birth to Kindergarten age and expectant women for over 40 years, offers free Head Start preschool, free Head Start and Early Head Start home visiting programs and subsidized Child-Care in Franklin/Hampshire Counties. Spanish speaking services available. Call 413-475-1405 in Franklin County or 413-387-1250 in Hampshire County for more information. PCDC is a program of Community Action of the Franklin, Hampshire and North Quabbin Regions.

AMHERST REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

**ULTIMATE  
FRISBEE**

**TAG**

**SALE**

**Date: Saturday, May 29**

**Location: Amherst Town Common  
(North End)**

**Rain Spot: Amherst Regional High School**

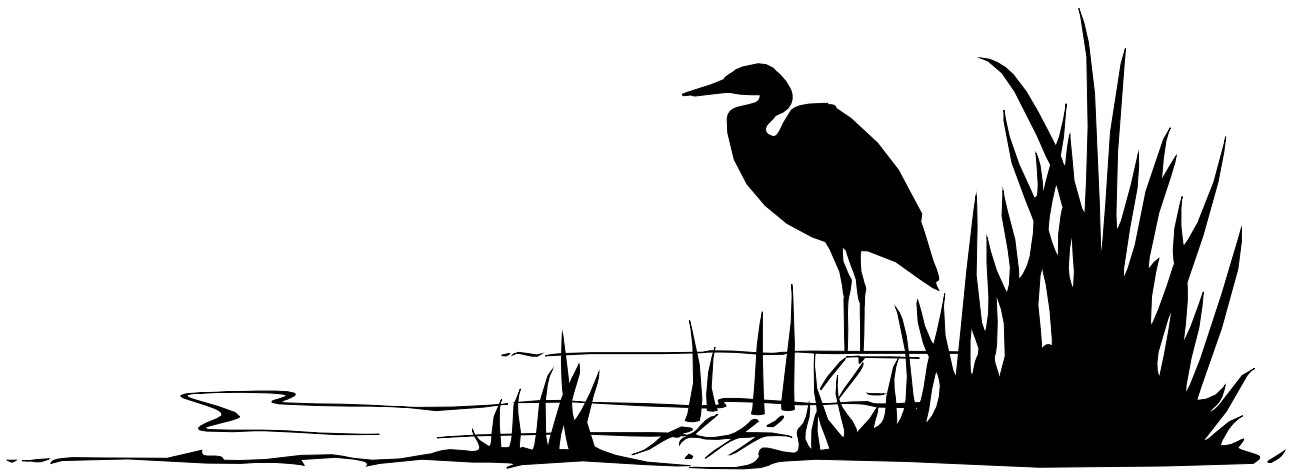
**Time: 8:00 am–12:00 pm**

**Help to  
keep the program  
strong!**

**Household goods \* jewelry \* toys  
games \* small furniture \* books \* clothing  
and much more great stuff!**

Sponsored by:  
Regional High School Girls JV & Varsity Ultimate Teams  
All proceeds go to: Amherst Regional High School Girls JV  
& Varsity Ultimate Teams

This is not a school sponsored event.



19th Annual

**PANCAKE BREAKFAST  
TO SUPPORT  
PUFFER'S POND**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 2010  
8:30 -11:00 A.M.**

The breakfast will be held at Mill River Recreation Area  
Route 63 (Montague Road), North Amherst, rain or shine!

All-you-can-eat pancake breakfast with real maple syrup  
for a donation of \$6.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children.

There will be a raffle with many fabulous prizes,  
and tank tops, tote bags, and t-shirts available for purchase.

The Horse Mountain Jazz Band will provide music to lighten  
your hearts (out of the goodness of their hearts).

*If you'd like to volunteer at the event, please call Debbie at 549.0924.*

This is not a school-sponsored event.

*What we've all been waiting for 😊*

**Wildwood Family Picnic  
Sponsored by the PTO**

**Wednesday, June 9th 5:30 – 7:30pm**

Come celebrate the end of school with the Wildwood Community! Bring your picnic supper; PTO will provide dessert (cake) and water. In the spirit of "Go Green" we are encouraging families to bring water bottles (or cups) and forks (for cake) so we can reduce our use of plastic forks and cups; we'll have extras for those who need them but let's see if we can reduce our trash!