

October 29, 2010



Sixth graders at Morse Hill

The Wildwood Window

All around Wildwood: The Principal's view

The photo above shows some of our sixth graders during their all-day experience at the Morse Hill Outdoor Education Center in Shutesbury. In this remote, natural setting the students were challenged to overcome their own self-imposed sense of limitation. The activities were designed to help the sixth graders develop trust for each other and learn how to solve problems together by listening, cooperation and group planning. These skills are especially important right now because our sixth graders have come together from four different schools in Amherst for their last year of elementary school. The sixth grade teaching team will infuse the lessons learned at Morse Hill throughout the year in their classrooms. I was very impressed by the way this group of students kept up a positive attitude and worked together even as they braved the elements and faced difficult challenges.

This experience was generously underwritten by our Parent-Guardian Organization and the Wildwood Gift Account. Please see the newsletter page entitled Fundraising for ways that you can support similar enrichment activities at our school in the future.

This year, as we build our school culture we will look to the sixth graders to be the student leaders of Wildwood. Being the oldest children in an elementary school carries a special responsibility to help set the tone throughout the school, on the playgrounds, and even on the buses. Today, some of the sixth graders were brave enough to coordinate our first assembly which showcased student learning and accomplishments. The sixth graders were our 'MCs', introducing each segment of the gathering with a mixture of enthusiasm, humor, and poise. *Nick*

November 15th performance

Amherst Regional High School's Conjunto de Bomba will perform at Wildwood on November 15th at 10:30 for K-3 and 11:00 for 4-6. Conjunto de Bomba is an ensemble of musicians, dancers, and drummers from Amherst Regional High School. This group will present the energetic sights and sounds of Bomba, which is an Afro-Puerto Rican music and dance form. This assembly will be a celebration of the richness of Latin American culture. Did you know we have over 60 students at Wildwood who are of Spanish-speaking heritage? Students in grades 1-2, who have been studying Spanish at school, will also perform at the assembly.

Important Upcoming Events

November 2 – Early Release Day, 1:20 pm

November 2,3, 4 – Scholastic Book Fair

November 4 – Picture Retake Day

November 5 – Fine Arts Center field trip, grades K-4

November 11 – No School Veterans' Day

November 15 – Conjunto la Bomba performances

November 19 – Walk-to- School Day

November 25, 26 – No School, Thanksgiving

We Want Wildwood to be.....

Our classroom teachers have been asking their students to complete the sentence: "*I want Wildwood to be a school where...*". Soon these writings will adorn the hallways as proclamations of our hopes and dreams for our school. As I have read their statements I have noticed that many students want a school where everyone feels safe and "*no one is bullied, teased or picked on.*" Now teachers can have discussions with the children about what they can do to make this dream a reality.

PGO THANK YOUs

The newly formed and energized Wildwood PGO extends heartfelt gratitude to our former PGO Chairs. **Meg Rosa and Prentiss Austin** guided the Marks Meadow community through a difficult school closing while **Anne Marshall and Kristen Ford** provided Wildwood families and teachers with stability and leadership during a year of uncertainty. Thanks to all for demonstrating the power of cooperation, collaboration and community as we embark on a terrific new beginning!

THANK YOU to **Sheilah Jones, Susan Rupp, and Pam Williams** for organizing another successful Genevieve's Gift Wrap Fundraiser, raising over \$2700 for Wildwood! We also want to thank all the families who participated in this fundraiser. You will be receiving the items you ordered around November 10th.

THANK YOU to **Anne Duffy, Ruth Hutton, and Robin Fordham** for getting beautiful photos taken of all the children - and raising money with the Picture Day Fundraiser. If you purchased photos, thank you! In case you are not happy with how the photos came out, Picture Re-take Day will be on November 4th.

THANK YOU to **Jen Mendelsohn** for inspiring everyone to send in their Box Tops, to earn \$254.30 for the school!

OUR NEW PGO LIST OF LEADERS for the 2010-2011 School Year

Our New Leaders

Chair - Kelly King (2 year term) Comes from the Crocker Farm community

Co-Chair - Carmelina Romano (1 year term) Comes from the Mark's Meadow community

Returning Board Members

Treasurer - Kristen Ford comes from the WW community

Secretary- Anna Butler comes from the WW community

Committees

Childcare Coordinator-Susan Bellak comes from the WW Community

Class Parent Coordinator- Jill Shulman comes from the WW community

Communications Coordinator- Tracy Hightower comes from the MM community

Fund Raising Coordinator- Simon Alciere comes from the WW community

Volunteer Coordinator - Mary Crowe is a parent from the WW & CF community

Building a Community of Avid Readers at Wildwood School

If Wildwood School parents were asked what they love to read, there would be many answers including the paper, magazine articles, fiction of all kinds, nonfiction, poetry, perhaps even mythology. One answer that we probably would not hear is, "...books that are hard to read and understand." That's because as readers we read for enjoyment and information. We read to discover about the world and ourselves. Reading books that are too hard is just no fun!

This is why during September and October teachers at Wildwood School rallied students' energy and enthusiasm for becoming avid readers. In addition to helping students understand themselves as readers and setting goals, students learned to select books that interest them, and are matched to their reading level. Reading research indicates that children who read books in a phrased and fluent manner, at a good rate, with 95-96% accuracy, and deep understanding make the greatest progress over time.

Amherst-Pelham Schools rely on beginning of the year assessments as well as previous school achievement to determine appropriate reading levels for students.

Based on this and other information, teachers steer students in the direction of books that will allow them to gain the skills and strategies they need to read with deep comprehension and synthesis. Skills might include understanding characters and their development over time, following plots, uncovering the main idea, making a claim or determining a theme and supporting it with detailed reasoning. Strategies include accessing background knowledge, learning to predict based on prior knowledge and previously stated or implied information in the text, learning to ask deep questions and locate answers, visualize, infer, analyze, interpret and synthesize.

Although reading is often done independently, in the mind of the reader, one of our goals as teachers is to provide students with opportunities to talk about their ideas with partners, and in small groups. Students learn to have meaningful conversations with one another, share their understandings, provide supporting details, and build on one another's ideas as way to interpret text together.

Teachers at Wildwood School invite parents to partner with us in helping students become avid and enthusiastic readers. In Reading Workshop we are providing explicit instruction in skills and strategies as well as independent time for students to read for extended periods of time. Parents can also encourage this by providing their children with interruption-free reading time at home with books that are at an appropriate reading level. There is a direct correlation between how much a student reads and their ability to read higher level texts with understanding. So get out the books, and be a reading family. It will pay off in dividends far greater than any bank can offer!

Rachmana Santorelli
Language Arts Reading Teacher
Wildwood School



Dear Wildwood Parents and Friends,

Welcome to all new and returning Wildwood families. I would like to introduce myself, Elaine Donoghue. This will be my 18th year as the librarian, but I first became involved with Wildwood in 1981 as a parent – I have three Wildwood alums, all grown up now. I am very happy to say that this year I am assisted by Barbara Cooper for three days per week. There have been no assistants for three out of the past four years, due to budget cuts so I am gratified to have Barbara's expertise back to help the students and staff of Wildwood.

I have always said that Wildwood students are voracious readers. Last year, over 21,000 books were borrowed from the Wildwood Library (and shelved again thanks to all the library volunteers). From the looks of things, this year's circulation will be much higher! So far this school year, almost 5,000 books have been borrowed. That tells me we're on our way to an all-time high for 2010-2011. It's been a pleasure to see both new and returning students so excited about reading. The library is a daily swirl of activity and nothing makes me happier than to see the right book in the hands of a student. At a time when there are so many enticements that compete for a child's time and attention, it is great to see this excitement. If your child isn't bringing home library books, please encourage him or her to do so.

For the 14th year now, the Wildwood Library is participating in the Massachusetts Children's Book Award program. I have started introducing the books to students in grades 4-6 and encouraging them to read at least five of the 25 nominated books. I have purchased five copies of each book, in an effort to meet the high demand for these titles. After reading five of them, students will be eligible to vote for their favorite at the end of February. We then tally the Wildwood results and submit them to the state coordinator of the program and receive the statewide results. Wildwood readers are usually in sync with the other students in the state; last year Found by Margaret Peterson Haddix was the all-around favorite.

On Monday, September 20th, 65 students gathered in the library to celebrate their accomplishment of reading over 1,500 books over the summer and raising over \$3,000 for the library. Students were praised for enriching their lives with the gift of reading. In addition, each student personally came to the rescue of his/her school library so that everyone could continue to have access to the latest and greatest books. Because of the Read-a-thon, an additional 300 or more new books will be purchased for the library. The library budget has never been restored after the from the budget cuts that began six years ago, so these funds make a tremendous difference. At the end of the celebration, participants were awarded certificates and gift books. Liz Rosenberry, Read-a-thon Organizer, is our own local hero and has the appreciation of the entire Wildwood community. This was her last year coordinating the Read-thon. If it sounds like something you might be interested in undertaking this next year, please get in touch with one of us. Finally, to all the families who supported and encouraged their students - a sincere THANK YOU.

Because the staffing of the library also has never been the same due to budget cuts, the library is very dependent on volunteers for the most essential tasks. Without you to help students locate their books on the shelves, get them checked out and later get them back on the shelves, not to mention all the other library tasks, the library could not function. If you have a few hours that you can give each week, please consider being a library volunteer. It's fun, busy and you'll get a firsthand look at all our great books. I'd love to hear from you.

Elaine Donoghue, Librarian
edonghue@arps.org

Wildwood Library Book Borrowing Information



Books for the Wildwood Library are purchased to support the curriculum and to provide children with leisure reading. Children are encouraged to borrow books, take them home and share them with their families. They may select books during their library visits each week, before school, and during the day during specified “open library” times when there are not classes in the library.

I would like all of the children to be able to enjoy the resources of the library and so it is important that children learn to be responsible users of the materials in the library. This includes taking care of the books, returning them on time and replacing them if they are lost or damaged beyond repair. Once a child signs out a book and leaves the library with it, he/she is responsible for that book until it is returned to the library.

Commonly Asked Questions

- How many books may be borrowed?

Kindergarten: one book at a time

1st, 2nd and 3rd grades: 3 books

4th grade: 4 books

5th grade: 5 books

6th grade: 6 books

Additional books needed for class projects may also be borrowed and should be checked out in the student's name, not the teacher's.

- When are books due?

Kindergarten: books are due in one week.

Grades 1-6: books are due on the first school day of the following month.

For example: A book borrowed during the month of October will be due on November 1st. During the last week of a month the due date is advanced to the following month. (A book checked out on October 27th will be due on December 1st.)

About two weeks after the due date has passed, overdue notices are given to teachers to distribute to students with overdue books. Students with overdue books may borrow only one other book until the overdues are returned. If a child does not respond to repeated notices, a letter will be sent home.

- What if a book is damaged?

Children are instructed in the care of books. Books that are damaged have their lives shortened, are less attractive to use and convey the message that books can be mistreated. When books are returned in a damaged condition but are repairable and can continue to be used, a \$3.00 damage fee will be charged. If a book is damaged beyond repair then the full cost of the book will be charged.

- How can we prevent damaged books?

Children are encouraged to transport their books to and from home in plastic bags inside their backpacks. Forgotten lunches and leaky drinks in backpacks are often the cause of damaged library books. Special care should be taken on rainy and snowy days.

- What if a book is lost?

If a book is lost then it must be replaced or paid for by the borrower. In some cases, the library will accept another book in good condition in its place, if it is one we would like to have. This must be cleared with me first.

- What if we think that the book has been returned?

If you think that a book has been returned, let me know and I will check the shelves. You should also check with your child's teacher to see if it is in the classroom. Books are sometimes accidentally returned to the Jones Library, where they are held in their front office. The Jones Library does not usually send the books on to us. While you are searching for a missing book you may want to restore your child's borrowing privileges by signing a form agreeing to pay for the book if it does not turn up by the end of the school year. These forms are available in the library.

- What if we are leaving Wildwood and not sure if we have any books?

If your family is going to be leaving, whether temporarily or permanently, be sure to return all library materials before your departure. If you are not sure if you child has any books, please contact me.

I hope that this information will be helpful to you in understanding the borrowing policy. I make every effort to make the Wildwood Library an inviting library for the children, staff and Wildwood families. If everyone does their part in taking care of the materials, the library will have a collection that all can enjoy.

Thank you for helping our students become responsible users of Wildwood Library!

Elaine Donoghue,
Wildwood Librarian
edonoghue@arps.org
413-362-1424

FUNDRAISING

Book Fair: We need volunteers to help run the Book Fair! See other page for more details.

Stop and Shop \$100 Gift Cards - available for sale in the Main Office (Ms. Champoux) or email vivianfliu@comcast.net.

Dean's Beans: Order your delicious fresh-roasted, fair-trade Wildwood coffee! We partner with Dean's Beans to bring you several wonderful blends. Orders are due on the first Wednesday of every month. Your coffee will be delivered to you (via your child's backpack) the following Wednesday. Remember, every pound you order raises \$3 for PTO sponsored activities that enrich our kids' school experience. Order forms available in the Main Office or at www.wildwoodpto.org, on the right side of the page.

PASSIVE FUNDRAISING (aka "EARN \$ FOR WW WHILE YOU SHOP")

Have a Target VISA card? Up to 1% of your purchases on your Target REDcard will be credited to Wildwood (WW ID# 58647). Visit Target.com/tcoe or call 1-800-316-6142 to designate our school. Last year, \$606 was donated to Wildwood on behalf of 25 cardholders.

Box Tops: Thank you to all for collecting so many Box Tops - we earned \$280 for Wildwood! Congratulations to Ms. Holland's class who collected 204 Box Tops and Mr. Burgoyne' collected 212 Box Tops! And a great job was also done by - Ms. Woods' (190 Box Tops), Ms. Munroe's (160 Box Tops), and Ms. Radtke's classes (150 Box Tops). For all of last year we earned \$290 for the whole school year. We are off to a great start. Please continue to clip and collect Box Tops - we will be collecting them again in Spring 2011. Ask your relatives to collect Box Tops for you, too.

Stop and Shop Bonus Bucks: Congratulations to Ms. Wood's fourth grade classroom for returning the most Bonus Bucks forms. 167 people have signed up for the Bonus Bucks program - and it's not too late to sign up for yourself or your friends/family/neighbors at www.stopandshop.com/aplus to designate Wildwood as the recipient of your shopping.

Big Y: Marks Meadows and Wildwood combined our points for a total of 2.5 million points, which Nick **will put to good use for the school**. The Big Y shopping program has been discontinued.

VOLUNTEERING AT WILDWOOD

CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information): If your volunteer opportunity brings you into contact with the children at school (or on a field trip), you need to be CORI'd for Wildwood every three years. For the CORI, bring your license into the front office for photocopying BEFORE you start volunteering.

PGO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please contact Mary at mary@amherstgreen.com (896-7798) if you are interested in volunteering.

PGO SERVICES

Attorney: to help Wildwood acquire non-profit status (501c3). Please contact Tracy Hightower (wildwoodelementarypgo@gmail.com) for more details, as she has gone through the process for Marks Meadows.

Snacks: organize donations/distributions for after-school & homework clubs.

Paper goods/drinks: Bring paper goods/drinks for all school events

Staff Appreciation Luncheon (May/June): Looking for 1-2 coordinators to collect funds from parents to fete the teachers and staff in style as a thank you for all their hard work. Contact Susan Bellak or Jen Mendelsohn who hosted a beautiful luncheon last year if you have questions: susan@bellak.name and njmendel@gmail.com.

COMMUNITY BUILDING EVENTS

Multicultural Fair: We have a coordinator (Keisha Dennis) and photographer (Anna-Beth Winograd) and are looking for people to take the lead for: Entertainment, International Fashion Show, Scavenger Hunt, and Food Coordinator.

ENDANGERED! Kids' Clubs & Family Evenings: Chess Club, Science Club, Science Night, Math Night, and Game Night will NOT be occurring if volunteers do not step up to run them.

Spring Dance: need a coordinator (DJ all set)

End of Year Picnic complete with Principal Dunking Machine

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Library: Volunteers needed in the Wildwood library on a weekly basis to help students locate books, as well as assist with checking books in and out, reading to small groups, shelving, covering new books, working on displays, shelf reading to keep things in order, mending books, and a variety of other library tasks. Come for an hour or two once a week and be part of a very busy and vibrant library scene. Please contact Elaine Donoghue, Librarian at edonoghue@arps.org or call 362-1424.

Art Room: Art Room Volunteer needed to help the second grade classes on Mondays (Rothrock), Tuesdays (Jagadeesh), and Fridays (Brown), from 1:25-2:05. Contact Art Teacher Julie Riviera (RiveraJL@arps.org) to volunteer on a weekly basis. **Materials needed:** Old towels, and wood scraps (no splinters) and not too large for kids to handle - for wood sculptures.

MAP project: A volunteer is needed to collate all the information the students are sending in about their heritage, and to display this information on a huge map to be displayed at school. Contact Nick Yaffe: yaffen@arps.org.

FUNDRAISERS

Summer Read-a-thon: This is a FUN fundraiser that promotes summer reading and helps buy new books for the library (\$3000 this year). Liz Rosenberry (lrosenberry@verizon.net) has run this program and will help you get started.

Amherstopoly Sales: Coordinate sales of 100 brand-new board games - that's about \$2000-\$2500 pure profit for Wildwood.

Recycling Fundraiser: Organize a recycling program for ink cartridges or other electronics. Contact Tracy Hightower for details at wildwoodelementarypgo@gmail.com.

***WOW WILDWOOD WALKS!
INTERNATIONAL WALK to SCHOOL DAY
HAS BEEN RESCHEDULED TO
November 19, 2010***

Dear Wildwood Parents and Guardians,

Your school is participating in Safe Routes to School, a program offered by MassRIDES, the Commonwealth's travel options service of the Executive Office of Transportation. The Safe Routes to School program aims to reduce congestion, air pollution, and traffic congestion near participating schools, while increasing the health, safety, and physical activity of elementary and middle school students.

Our first activity this year will be International Walk to School Day on Friday, November 19, 2010. Each year, millions of children, parents, teachers and community leaders across the globe walk to school to celebrate International Walk to School Day.

This year we will walk as a community to school starting at Bertucci's Restaurant on the corner of East Pleasant and Triangle Streets. We hope that as many children in the Wildwood Community can participate as possible with their parents and guardians. Parents/guardians may park in the Bertucci's lot for the walk. All the children, regardless of whether they walk from Bertucci's, will participate in Walk to School Day by walking at school on Wednesday.

Children need to be pre-registered for this walk from Bertucci's so please return the attached form to your child's teacher no later than Monday, November 15th. We will meet at Bertucci's at 7:30am the morning of the walk. We will depart from Bertucci's promptly at 7:45am.

To find out more about the event please contact one of the parent coordinators: Sarah Auerbach at sarah.auerbach@comcast.net, Katherine Appy at katherineappy@gmail.com, or Sabine Holub at sabineholub@mac.com.

We look forward to seeing you on Friday, November 19th, for **International Walk to School Day**.

Sincerely,

Nick Yaffe, The Safe Routes to School Committee and the Wildwood PGO

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PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY Monday November 15th or
CONTACT SARAH AUERBACH, sarah.auerbach@comcast.net, 253-
6620 TO REGISTER YOUR CHILD.

YOUR CHILD MUST BE PRE-REGISTERED TO WALK.

WOW WILDWOOD WALKS
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2010
MEET AT BERTUCCI's at 7:30am
Walk Departs at 7:45am

___ *Yes, I will walk with my child from Bertucci's on Friday, November 19, 2010.*

___ *Yes, I want my child to participate on Friday, November 19th, but am unable to join the walk. I will register my child that morning after dropping them off.*

___ *Yes, I want to volunteer the morning of the walk by arriving at Bertucci's by 7am to help set up the registration table and the light refreshments. (Please provide your contact information if you are volunteering to help.)*

Parent Name: _____

Child Name and grade: _____

Email and Telephone Contact info: _____

Wildwood Art Studio News

October 2010

Welcome to our new and returning families!

In the art studio we are getting to know the routines as we explore a variety of media, techniques and ideas. This year our kindergarten classes are being taught by Janet Winston, who taught art in the district for many years.

In first through sixth grade, we began with name designs as a way to help us (especially me!) learn everyone's names. We went on to drawing the figure in **fifth and sixth grade**, and drew the skeleton too, to learn about anatomy. Several **fourth grade** classes worked with torn paper to create landscape collages.

Now in the **upper grades** we are creating mosaics using painted Styrofoam as the "tesserae" or pieces that make up our images. Each grade level will be focusing on a different theme including Aztec masks, Islamic art, and the work of Spanish architect Antoni Gaudi. I will be presenting a mosaic workshop at the Massachusetts Art Educator Conference in November at UMASS and will be sharing some of our student work.

In **first through third** grades, we looked at nature as inspiration for a number of different projects, while learning about painting. **First graders** painted beautiful leaves which they filled with patterns and colors, and then painted bark using all kinds of brushstrokes to create interesting textures. We put our creations together to make imaginary tree collages which are now hanging in the front lobby. **Second and third graders** painted gourds and leaves from observation. Now students are creating masks out of found materials, and learning about masks from different parts of the world.

I would like to invite you to stop by the Nacul Center Gallery on Main Street in Amherst if you would like to see some of my work which is included in the Amherst Biennial. The exhibit will be open through early December.

It was lovely to meet some of you at our Curriculum Night. Please feel welcome to stop by. If you are interested in being an art studio volunteer, or wish to contact me, please email me at riverajl@arps.org.

Julie Rivera