



The Wilson School
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The Wilson Word

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Celebrating Our 97th Year of Excellence!

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Mastering Tumbling Skills in PE

By Rachel Simpson, Physical Education Teacher

Physical Education wrapped up 2009 with a tumbling unit. Tumbling skills involve balance, muscular strength, and flexibility. Third through Sixth Grade worked on ten specific skills. Once skills were introduced the students could work at their own pace to master the skill. Many students discovered a talent they didn't know they had! The skills introduced were the arabesque, bridge, rocker, v-sit, forward roll, forward roll v-up, tip-up, tri-pod, cartwheel and partial hand-stand.

Junior Kindergarten through Second Grade practiced a variety of tumbling, flexibility and balance skills as well. Try this: Can you sit cross-legged (like a pretzel) then stand straight up, without using your hands or knees, and end up standing with ankles still crossed? Many of our students are amazing at this skill. Can you "thread the needle?" Link your hands together at the fingertips and then step through your arms one leg at a time keeping your fingers laced. Your arms should end behind your back without ever unlocking your fingers. This requires great flexibility and balance, but your child may make this skill look quite easy.

Pre-Kindergarten worked on a variety of balance skills as well. They balanced on a variety and number of body parts: one foot; two hands and one foot; one foot and one hand; a hand, a head and a knee. They can come up with many creative ways to balance. Balance was also incorporated in several different obstacle courses, using balance beams, balance boards and stepping-stones.



We will kick off 2010 with a floor hockey unit. Fifth and Sixth Graders will play a variety of hockey games including: alley hockey and king pin hockey, all leading up to full court games. Third and Fourth Graders will play a combination of floor hockey and pillo polo games. Junior

Kindergarten through Second Grade will utilize hockey type skills with the pillo polo sticks. Pre-Kindergarten has worked on hitting a variety of large and small balls on the floor using the "lollipops."

When we are given a day of beautiful weather we try to get outside to keep up with our cardiovascular fitness by running. The students are really mastering the art of "pacing" with our monthly marathon challenge.



Happy Holidays & Have A Wonderful Winter Break!

January 4, 2010	School Resumes
January 13, 2010	Used Book Drop Day
January 18, 2010	Martin Luther King Jr. Day; No School
January 20, 2010	Visiting Author Event: Ridley Pearson!

Parents' Association Update

The Wilson School Parents' Association began a new regular activity this year, the Wednesday Wilson Café. Once every month, before the Birthday Book Club Wednesday assembly, parents can stop by to chat with other members of the Wilson community over a cup or two of organic shade-grown coffee (courtesy of Tesoros del Sol Coffee). Come in from the cold and say hi! Thanks to the PA volunteers who have helped out so far this year with the café: Jan DeFusco, Megan Philip, Anu Trzaska, and Michelle Swanson. Thanks also to Mr. Falkner and Ms. Unanue, who have helped us out every time! The Café schedule for the remainder of the year: January 27, February 24, March 10, April 28, and May 12.

Congratulations!

Congrats to Bobby Donnelly, Wilson Alum '09, for being awarded the Nussbaum Music Scholarship at Priory! He had to audition for the scholarship, which is quite an honor. Well done, Bobby!

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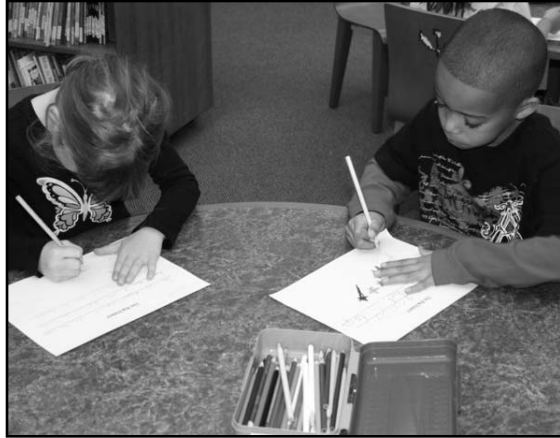
Students Study Author Eric Carle

By Joe Thomas, Interim Library Coordinator

In the early childhood and primary grades, students are spending the winter studying the author Eric Carle. Carle is the author and illustrator of more than seventy books for young children. Students are exploring the library's collection of Carle's work, such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *Draw Me a Star*. After listening to the stories and looking at the books, students are identifying and discussing unique or particularly interesting aspects of both the stories and the illustrations. In addition to studying his work, students are learning about Carle's background and his approach to story writing and his unique method of illustration. He illustrates his books using layered collages of hand-painted paper to create complex and colorful images.

In addition to studying Eric Carle and his works, the Second Grade class is doing a unit on "Fractured Fairy Tales." A Fractured Fairy Tale is a variation on a familiar story with changes to the characters, plot, or point of view. After reviewing the main concepts and components of both traditional fairy tales and their "fractured" counter-parts, the students are in the process of creating their own tale. They are selecting their own characters, settings and plot from a bank of familiar fairy tale themes to create a unique story.

The Third Graders are using the library skills



reviewed earlier in the year to begin some basic research projects. In the classroom, they are beginning a discussion of food chains, biomes and habitats. During their time in the resource center, the students are exploring the print resources available together information such as animal life, plant life, climate, and location of the biomes they selected.

In the upper grades, the students are wrapping up a wide variety of ongoing research projects. The Fourth Graders completed a review of non-fiction materials and the Dewey Decimal System. They then made posters for sections of the library identifying the non-fiction subjects that can be found in that section. The Fifth Graders are finishing their colonial research projects. Each partner group selected one of the 13 colonies to research. They used the computers to create a "Travel Brochure" to promote their colony. This was a joint project between Resource, Technology and their Social Studies time in the classroom. Sixth Grade is preparing to present a research project on South American geography. They used their research skills to find information in our collection, the collection of the St. Louis County Library, and in online sources. The Sixth Grade class period is team taught, and this project is a joint effort between Resource and Technology.

Fourth Graders Show How To Care For Community

By Roberta Goldfeder & Lisa Leuther, Fourth Grade Teachers

The Fourth Graders have begun their study of Greek Mythology. This unit will culminate with the class taking the National Mythology Exam at the beginning of March. The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the magnificent myths about the 12 gods who resided on Mount Olympus. Not only are the myths fascinating and enjoyable to read and discuss, but they give Fourth Graders the opportunity to discover the roots of many vocabulary words, the inspiration and

subject matter in the fine arts, an understanding of Greek references in literature, and even the brand names of many of the products we use and see advertised in today's market.

Just before Thanksgiving, PK and Fourth joined in a sharing feast to celebrate the coming holiday. Upon returning from the Thanksgiving break, the students began bringing in gifts for less fortunate children. This

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Tip of the Hat to Auction Volunteers!

By Lisa Leuther & Linda Roth, Auction Co-Coordinators

A tip of the hat to all of the volunteers that are working very hard to ensure another successful auction! We need your help too. Here are some great ways that you can help:

- 1. Donate, Donate, Donate** – The procurement deadline is January 15. Solicit favorite restaurants and stores. You know those gifts that you received that are nice but they aren't your style or maybe you already have something just like them; donate them to the auction. It's a great way to help Wilson and not offend your friends. Donor forms are available on the website and in the front foyer.
- 2. Joy Liss Fund** – This fund pays for the faculty, staff and their significant others to attend the auction. Donate before the end of the year and you can benefit from the tax deduction.
- 3. Gift Cards** – While you're out buying gift cards for

friends and relatives, buy an extra one for Wilson. Some businesses offer specials when you buy cards of a certain value. For example, buy \$50 in cards and they will give you a \$25 card.

- 4. Attend the auction** – Look for your invitation to arrive in the mail in January. Invite friends and family to come too.

The Auction Steering Committee would like to say thank you to all of the people that have helped us so far. You can still volunteer to help with this year's auction. If you are interested please contact Linda Roth (lroth@wilsonschool.com) or Lisa Leuther (lleuther@wilsonschool.com). We appreciate your support. Keep up the good work!

Coming next month: Find out about the exciting items for the Live Auction, the Best of Live Sweepstakes, raffle items, and the return of the Prize Wheel!

Fourth Grade ... continued from page 3

project ended in a massive gift-wrapping event that allowed everyone to share the joy of giving to others. Fourth Graders earned either all or a portion of the cost of their gifts. Many did extra chores. Some students took a part of their savings or gift cards to contribute to the purchase of their gift. This undertaking is a lovely and heartfelt way to remind all of us about the meaning of the holidays.

Fourth Graders were busier than ever during the last few weeks of December. It was a time of fast-paced, enthusiastic activities. It was their month to teach the Wilson theme of caring. They specifically educated everyone about the spirit of caring for our community. The class discussed among themselves the various problems we see in a community. They then interviewed friends, family and neighbors to find out what they thought were problems in their community. The class then listed the top five problems. The class created posters to display the problems and solutions to those difficult situations. Fourth Graders want all of us to care more about our communities by not littering, driving carefully and soberly, being responsible pet owners and courteous citizens. They want each of us to respect one another's personal property and to care about those who cannot afford to live in nice homes and go to great schools. The fourth grade message: If we care for our

communities in a more considerate and kinder way then we all reap the rewards.

Fourth Graders also must meet the demands of traditional academics. They are increasing their understanding of new math concepts, the strategies of problem solving, new grammar and spelling rules. They are strengthening their computer and research skills, learning literary devices and elements to help them recognize good writing and encourage them to become effective writers.

The New Year will offer new challenges. There will be new novels to read, new math concepts to learn, and most importantly, new ways to become a stronger and more successful students.

