

(Continued)

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on June 12. The AGM summary and our final financial position for the year was presented at this meeting and will be available in detail on our Website. The summary will include a breakdown of revenue from fundraisers held during the year, including Fun Fair, movie nights, direct donations, pizza lunch—es, Mabels' Labels, Supperworks (Beach location), etc. And also all the activities Council funded during the year, including Scientists in the School, Silver Birch reading program, art performances, parent workshops, school risers, graduation, the ukulele program, etc.

On behalf of the Council, have an amazing summer!

— **Paula Weekes Kahn, Chair, Wilkinson Parent Council**

Spring concert update

Thank you to everyone who attended Wilkinson's spring concert on Thursday May 3. The school raised \$1,000 in donations, which will go toward the cost of our new risers!

All-star volunteers

Wilkinson took time out on Tuesday June 12 and hosted a Volunteer Tea for the many volunteers in the Wilkinson Community and the members of the Parent Council.

Grades – A True Story By Mr. Low

We are coming to the end of the year and unfortunately, there's one person in Room 8 who has not done well in Grade 1. He just never got the reading and writing. His printing was messy and he rarely attempted to write more than a sentence. Even with extra help, his final grade would be Ds in reading and writing. It hurts me every time I have seen this happen.

It's been hard for me to give my students grades. In our system, I have learned that the letter grades represent how a student compares to the average of her/his grade. So high marks means above average but doesn't necessarily mean she/he has learned that much. It seems strange, but a student that gets a low grade may have made great progress over the year. For example, I have had students come into my class not knowing how to read or recite the whole alphabet. By the end of the year, she/he may be independently reading beginning level books. This is very good progress but her/his marks will still be Ds or Cs.

I have also learned some other lessons over the decades, like low grades don't mean a student isn't smart and that writing seems to be a pivotal skill in a student's school career. It affects a child's achievement in all the subjects since he/she will have to write answers, stories, projects, science reports, explaining one's thinking, etc. Also, good readers are not necessarily good writers but good

writers are always good readers. Good writers are not necessarily good spellers and good spellers are not necessarily good writers; spelling is a skill independent to the intellectual process of expressing one's ideas.

The student I mentioned at the beginning of this story went on to fail Grade 3. I am not sure whether this helped him or not. He was good at math and science and had little interest in art. He actually didn't learn to read and write effectively until after his second year of university. Seems that reading stacks of textbooks and journal articles and writing a ton of essays have had a good effect. By the end of his undergraduate education program, he finished first in his class, but, the grades don't end here.

He decided he wanted to become a public school teacher so he went off to teacher's college. Halfway through the short eight-month program he was devastated by another low grade. His placement professor, after watching him teach one lesson said, "You lack the personal qualities and skills to be a teacher. You should think of something else to do with your life." I didn't think my lesson was that bad. I thought I was going to be a good teacher. I almost quit because of a bad mark.

I realize now, that a grade is only one person's opinion and it doesn't mean that the student is or will have to be that way forever. It's a signpost of where a student has been rather than a fortune teller's card. I teach for progress not grades. I think over carefully what I say to my students and the marks I give them. Ironically, I might be the worstest student in Wilkinson. In one way or the other, I've been in school for the past 41 years and I have never gotten past Grade 1!

— **Mr. Low**

Apologies

We would like to apologize for an error that appeared in May's newsletter. In it was said that the Art Show would be open late on Thursday, May 10th instead of saying Wednesday, May 9th. We are very sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused and we will be more diligent in the future.

Community News

BeLeaf Camp is back!

Are you looking for a fun, educational and Islamic way to have your children spend their summer? This July 2012, Madinah Masjid's Camp of BeLeaf is back for its sixth year and for the first time, we are holding two separate camps for Muslim boys and Muslim girls!

For more information, please visit <http://campbeleaf.webs.com/> or pick up a flyer and registration form from Madinah Masjid (located at 1015 Danforth Ave). Feel free to email any questions or concerns to campbeleaf@gmail.com. See you there!



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2012

Principal's Message

As the year winds to a close, it's time to reflect on our accomplishments for the 2011-2012 school year.

Some of those accomplishments include:

- Successful pathway and inquiry based curriculum initiatives;
- Silver Ecoschool status;
- A successful year with our intramural and inter-school athletic teams;
- Monthly Character Education assemblies;
- Clubs like reading, writing, art, newspaper, chess, Eco, etc.;
- Social justice and equity initiatives; and
- Many, many fun, enjoyable and educational field trips.

These are just a few things that made this past year successful.

A special thank you to our Parent Volunteers!! We are very fortunate to have parents who were willing and able to give the gift of time over the past school year. For those of you who were unable to volunteer in the school, the importance of the work you do supporting your child's learning, shaping their values and providing words of encouragement cannot be overstated. Thank you!

My gratitude also extends to the members of the School Council and its Executive. Your energy, enthusiasm and dedication throughout the year has a positive impact on our school. Your work benefits the entire school community and your commitment does not go by unnoticed.

And, of course, to our students: you make each day a memorable one and we are fortunate to share your educational journey with you. Your efforts make our school a better place!

On a personal note, I would like to extend my appreciation to the staff whose dedication to teaching and learning goes well beyond the call of duty. It is truly an honour to work with a highly motivated team of people who put forward a tremendous effort to keep their practice current and responsive to the needs of the students.

As this is the last newsletter of the year, on behalf of the staff, our best wishes for an enjoyable summer with your children! Happy holidays!

— **Allan Kelly, Principal**

Room Assignments for 2012-2013

Room # - Teacher

1 - Ms. Cheatley	19 - Mr. Pirso
2 - Ms. Mangos	20 - Ms. Currie
4 - Ms. Whitfield	21 - Mr. Mahovich
5 - Ms. Wareham	22 - Ms. Cameron
6 - Ms. Levy (music)	23 - Mr. Ryan
7 - Ms. Dimodugno	24 - Mr. Carkner
8 - New teacher	25 - Mr. Cross
9 - Ms. Vlahos	26 - Ms. Butler
10 - Mr. Bartl	27 - Mr. DePasqua
12 - Mr. Krentz (library)	28 - Ms. Bartkiw
13 - Ms. Cerqueira	29 - Ms. Cooke
14 - Ms. Dilorio	Gym: Mr Kasaval
15 - Ms. Nastos	/Mr. Bozobalian
16 - Mr. Bozabalian/Ms Gitlin	Reading Recovery: Ms. Zafred
18 - Ms. Stelmanis	Core French: Ms. Barbier

New staff: Mr. Bozabalian, Mr. Ryan, Ms. Cameron, TBA-room 8

Departing staff: Mr. Low, Mr. Enticknap, Ms. Ault, Ms. Wright, Ms. Banu

Wilkinson becomes a Silver Ecoschool!

Eco-Team News

After getting designated a Bronze EcoSchool last year, the entire Wilkinson community has been working hard to continue the greening of our school. A representative from the EcoSchools department at the Toronto District School Board came in to audit our school on Friday May 18. Mme Barbier and Ms. Adams met with her to discuss all the great initiatives taking place at Wilkinson. She was impressed to see that the office has started to purchase recycled paper, our newsletter is now electronic (yay!), all of the classroom lights were off, there were reusable paper bins in many locations, and lots of great examples of lessons around ecological literacy. We also mentioned our vegetable and learning gardens, which wouldn't be possible without our amazing parent community. We are extremely pleased that after all our hard work, we have been certified a SILVER ECOSCHOOL!

Some of the eco-initiatives we did at Wilkinson this year:

- The “caught being green” program
- The healthy eating program (encouraging litter-less snacks)
- Litter-less lunches
- Electronic newsletter
- The vegetable garden
- Recycling reps sorting through the recycling every Friday
- Keeping lights off when appropriate (with sunny day reminders on announcements)
- The Grades 5 and 6 visiting the Island School
- Using reusable paper bins
- Announcements to the school in general

Some plans for next year include:

- An EcoTeam blog! Check it out at <http://wilkinsonecoteam.edublogs.org/>
- A more defined EcoCommittee made up of teachers and parents
- “De-lamping,” which will take place over the summer. This will involve removing some unnecessary light bulbs around the school in order to save electricity
- Increased sharing of lessons on ecological literacy between teachers
- Installing bike racks for students to lock up their bikes behind the school

Thanks for all your support: packing litter-less lunches and snacks, signing up for the electronic newsletter, working on the school gardens and teaching your children about nature and the outdoors. It has been a great year, and we wish you a very enjoyable summer filled with bike riding, picnics, camping, playing in the dirt and watching the birds. Enjoy!

– Mme Barbier



EcoTeam meets endangered species

By Angelina Gao, Room 22

The Eco Team was very surprised when we were doing some gardening in the schoolyard and found stag beetle larvae in the mulch pile. Stag beetles, which are an endangered species in some parts of the world,

spend up to six years underground feeding on the decaying wood of broad-leaved trees. These mysterious creatures are rarely seen unless dug up by predators or gardeners – or Eco Teams. Humans know very little about stag beetles. Stag beetles play an important role in the ecosystem and that's why it is vital for the Eco Team – and anybody else who goes to Wilkinson – to try to help them. We can help them by trying not to disturb them if we dig them up.

Book Fair a huge success!

Library News

Wilkinson's second Scholastic book fair for the school year was another big success. Thanks to all students and parents who bought books and a big thanks to the parent volunteers and the Grade 5 and 6 helpers. A large portion of the book fair profits (this one and the fall book fair) will go toward the purchase of new atlases and dictionaries for the classrooms.

Library Books

By now all library books that students had out should have been returned to the library. However, during this busy end of the school year, things can be forgotten. If you find any library books over the summer, please put them aside and return them the first week back in September.

Library Blog Update

Don't forget to check out the Library Blog to find out what is happening at Wilkinson and in the library at <http://wilkinsonlibrary.tumblr.com>. Recent post topics include: a) a book review submitted by a student; b) poetry from Wilkinson students' entries from this year's Urban Voices collection; c) student art and videos that were included as part of a Rabindranath Tagore Exhibit at the McMichael Gallery in Kleinburg. If you are a twitter use, why not follow us at: @TDSB_wilkinson https://twitter.com/TDSB_wilkinson.

Summer Reading Program for Grade 4 and 5 students

Once again, Grade 4 and 5 students will have the opportunity to take books out over the summer. Information was sent home with students in these grades and students should already have their collections of books at home for the summer. Don't forget to return them on the first day back, and as usual, Happy reading!

– Mr. Krentz

Wilkinson's athletes make us proud!

Health & Physical Education News

Well, here we are in the final month of school, Wilkinson. May and June were busy months with team sports. The boys' soccer team played a tournament at Cosburn in May and showed a lot of heart playing against some very tough southern conference teams. The girls' soccer team also showed some grit but was unable to get to the playoffs. The ultimate Frisbee team did make it to the playoffs but fell short from getting another banner this year. We'll bounce back next year, Wilkinson, not to worry!

Congratulations to all teams as they made Wilkinson proud.

Track & Field

On another note, Wilkinson sent 60 athletes to Birchmount stadium to compete in track and field. Twenty students moved onto the conference finals, which was excellent! Two students moved onto the city finals, which took place on Tues. June 12. Jodie LaBorde did her best jump of just over four metres and Christopher Stokes placed seventh out of eight in his 400 m race. Way to go!

Jump Rope and Fun Run

Jump Rope for Heart kicked off from June 4-8 in the gym and was a big success. Students were not only skipping each day in the gym but much of the school was skipping outside during recess as well! Great way to stay fit. Thank you students and parents for taking the time to donate and collect donations for a worthy cause. Our school goal was (a very modest) \$3,000. I say modest because our school donated an incredible total of \$10,804.24! This is outstanding! I am truly blown away. Imagine all the people you are affecting in a positive way. Many! Keep on skipping, Wilkinson! Some students at Wilkinson also participated in the Toronto District School Board's Fit for Life Fun Run. It's great to see how active and involved many of the students are in extra curricular and charitable activities. Great job, Wilkinson!

Healthy eating

The H.E.A.L.T.H.Y. eating program is winding down but still going strong. The weather has been quite hot lately so why not end the year with some summer-type nutritious snacks? Excellent job this year, students and parents, with helping to keep your children and the community healthy by participating in the program!

Have a great, safe, healthy, active and fun summer!

– Mr. Kasava

Wilkinson's budding poets

Congratulations to Caeley Genereux and Taiyyaba Amer! The Toronto District School Board selected their poems to be in the TDSB's poetry anthology, Urban Voices. Their poems were chosen from entries submitted by students across the TDSB. You can find their poems on the library blog at wilkinsonlibrary.tumblr.com. Great job!

Operation sock monkey

Room 28 has spent the last few weeks learning to make sock monkeys for Operation Sock Monkey. Operation Sock Monkey is an organization that encourages people to make sock monkeys that will then be donated to communities around the world affected by disease, disaster and social/political turmoil. These monkeys then become a way to provide laughter, hope and healing to these communities. Thanks to Petrea Hansen-Adamidis, a parent in the classroom, who initiated this project and helped get the students started with cutting, sewing and stuffing the sock monkeys! If you would like more information about this organization, check out the website at www.operationsockmonkey.com.

– Ms. Bartkiw



Wilkinson student wins award

Nico Fischer recently received an Equity Award from Chris Spence, the director of Education at the Toronto District School Board, and Chris Bolton, the chair of the TDSB. Nico was nominated by Wilkinson's social worker, Kim Hicks, because he is viewed by his teachers and peers as a student who both cares about the marginalized at school and in the community, and he stands up for his convictions.

Fun Fair update – Thank you!

A huge thank-you to all the volunteers and patrons of this year's Fun Fair! On Sat. May 26, we saw record numbers of families attending our event and we surpassed our goal for event revenues. These revenues are important to continue the Parent Council's funding for initiatives during the school year such as Visiting Authors, Silver Birch and Visiting Artists. The event would not have been possible without the dedication of the many volunteers who worked tirelessly to coordinate the activities and food, not to mention the many hours of planning and soliciting prior to the big day. We pulled volunteers from our Wilkinson parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles! The Wilkinson staff and Dandylion Daycare staff are also an important source of support for us on the day of the event. We can always use more volunteers to work the stations. Why not start thinking now about how you can help! Event planning for Fun Fair 2013 begins in January.

– April Moon, Fun Fair Lead

Wilkinson Parent Council's Annual General Meeting

It has been a very busy year at Wilkinson! The Wilkinson Parent Council is an active group who are dedicated to enriching the academic lives of Wilkinson students and ensuring that parents are informed. I'd like to thank all of the members of this year's Council and other parent volunteers who contribute their time and energy to enhance the Wilkinson experience for the students and the community.

I'd like to highlight some of what we've accomplished this year through their efforts and commitment:

1. Parent outreach and community building through our Wil-Kitchen cooking evenings, parent workshops, garden clean-up party, as well as our movie nights and Pumpkinfest, which also double as fundraisers.
2. Providing funding for visiting authors and live performances for all grades, which support Wilkinson's focus on literacy and the arts.
3. Keeping Wilkinson green and promoting environmental awareness through our ongoing Learning Garden Revitalization and Veggie Garden.
4. Keeping parents informed through regular newsletters, the Parent Council bulletin board, Parent Council e-mails, our Web site and welcoming new parents at kindergarten registration.

Council meets monthly to provide input to the principal and staff on issues that affect our children. Some parents stay on the Council for a few years but each year members move on and we would like to ensure that the Council remains vibrant and representative of our school population. So when the Council nomination forms come home in September, we encourage you to join!