

# Garden Avenews



Produced by The Garden Avenue School Advisory Council

Fall 2010

## Chair's Message

Welcome to the Fall 2010 edition of *Garden Avenews*. Our newsletters help us to highlight and record the amazing things that are happening at Garden. It has been a great term filled with field trips, the talent show and potluck, JK/SK parent social and coffees, Terry Fox run, slo-pitch and cross-country teams, concerts, performances, craft fair, book fair, and bake sales. We are a small school, but we are filled with a strong sense of community that comes through in all we do. Thanks to everyone for your contributions so far!! I know we are going to have another fantastic year.

Our School Council meets monthly, and everyone is welcome to attend. The Council is an important forum for involving all members of the school community in matters that affect the education of our children. Many parents find that joining the School Council gives them a welcome opportunity to contribute, through their time and effort, to making our school the best environment for learning. The work of the Council also gives parents a

better understanding of how our school and the broader education system work. If you are not able to attend the meetings, the minutes and key reports are posted in the School Council section of our webpage at <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/gardenave/>.

Fundraising is a key priority. Through the efforts of the Council and the parent community we will contribute \$28,000 to the operation of the school in the form of funding for trips, books, performances, teaching technology, support for the

music and sports programs and more! Without funding from School Council these activities would not happen. Upcoming fundraisers include - Laughter for the Arts - a Comedy Night Fundraiser that will raise \$4500 for the school. We will continue with pizza lunches that raise \$3500.

And, our biggest fundraiser of the year happens in May - the Fun Fair - where we hope to raise \$6000 this year. [To make these fundraisers happen we need volunteers.](#)



### GARDEN ROCKS!!!

For more photos from the Talent Show and other Garden events, check out the photo galleries on our website at <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/gardenave/>.

Be sure to sign up for the weekly e-newsletter, Garden Avenews Direct.



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[Please consider donating some of your time.](#)

If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns that you think should be raised with the School Council, or if you'd like to help out with the Council activities please send me an email or leave a note in the School Council box in the office.

Jenn Sutherland, Chair  
Garden Ave School Council  
[jenn\\_sutherland@rogers.com](mailto:jenn_sutherland@rogers.com)

# Principal's Message

by Mrs. Martha Peterson

What a beautiful fall we have enjoyed! The children have been able to maximize outdoor learning opportunities which began with a whole school trip to Andrews Scenic Acres in September. Thank you to School Council for providing this excursion for grades one through six! In addition, classes have gone on a variety of field trips including visits to the Little Red Theatre, The Royal Winter Fair, the waterfront, Colborne Lodge, Warren Park and High Park.

Garden is a Gold Level Eco-School. Students have continued to care for and create a vibrant school grounds by planting tulips in front of the school, which we will enjoy in the spring. Our teachers and students have conducted classes in our rock circle learning area. Mr. McClure's class has conducted outdoor measurement activities under the trees. Students learned about eco responsibility and about the process of waste management together in a whole school assembly led by Mrs. Gacich. They have put this learning into practice, separating waste at pizza lunches.

In sports activities, thank you to Mr. Goetz for running the cross-

country team, and Ms. Green for coaching our grade 6 students slo-pitch team.

Wow! At the October talent show students displayed a wealth of creative ability! Talent is Garden's second name! The dances, songs, and comedy entertained us all! Thank you to the Parent Council for the time and organization which went into making this event such a success!

Kindergarten parents have been coming out to our monthly kinder coffees which are a chance to get to know each other, and provide an opportunity for us to meet and to talk together with Council members.

Mrs. Umezawa has worked to develop both a Junior and Primary choir this year with weekly morning practices. The Junior choir will be singing on the Grand Staircase of the Legislature during the holiday season and then will enjoy a tour of the Legislature with the Junior division! They will also give back to the community, sharing their holiday songs with the seniors at Copernicus Lodge.

School Council fundraising

supports and enriches our students' learning. The fundraising survey you complete in the fall is very important as it helps to guide School Council in the allocation of the proceeds. This term, fundraising has included our pizza lunches, Craft Fair and our annual fundraiser "Laughter for the Arts" at Hugh's Room on Dec. 28. Here's hoping you all can attend! We thank parent Simon Cotter who has organized this amazing evening of fun for the last 7 years!

Our charitable fundraising has included a donation to the Terry Fox Foundation for \$637.21 and a \$235.15 donation to the Red Cross for Pakistan relief. Thank you to the Garden community for your most generous support. Mittens and scarves from our Mitten Tree in the foyer are donated to a local women's shelter, as well as canned food donations to the TDSB Literacy Parenting and Family Centres.

Thank you to the School Council and all our parent community for your continuing most valued support. When home and school work together, "Oh the places we'll go!"

## 2011 School Council Meeting Schedule:

Thursday, January 13  
Thursday, February 10  
Thursday, March 24  
Wednesday, April 13  
Thursday, May 19  
Thursday, June 16

\*All meetings are held at 6:30pm in the staff room on the second floor. Babysitting can be arranged.

## School Council Executive 2010-2011

Chair - Jennifer Sutherland  
Volunteer & Fundraising Coordinator - Carole Reynolds  
Treasurer - Tanya Kakei  
Secretary - vacant  
Ward 7 Representative - Charene Gillies  
Communication/Website - Janice Roberts  
Newsletter - Liz Johnston Hill  
Staff - Martha Peterson (Principal), one teacher representative

# Fundraising Update

by Carole Reynolds, Fundraising Coordinator

Did you know that Parent Council fundraising significantly contributes to many of the activities in and out of the classroom at Garden? Scientists in the School, French books, musical instruments, field trips, recess activity bags and library resources are only some of the things that we have funded this year so far.

We have a small but mighty group of parents who work hard to make our fundraising events happen! You don't need to be an organizer to be involved. If every parent gives even an hour or two of time during the whole school year, we can raise much needed funds. And it's a great way to be involved in your child's school!

This fall we started with a bang at the Curriculum Night Bake & Pizza Sale, where we raised \$1128. Every cookie, brownie and cupcake that you donated made a difference!

Our next effort was the Craft Sale – our 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual! 25 vendors filled the gym with colourful and fun goods for holiday shopping. The chili bar sold out in record time, and the bake sale table once again overflowed with goodies. Thanks to Alison Myles and Cynthia Andru for organizing the vendors and poinsettia sale, as well as to Mark Reynolds for his famous chili! The totals

are still coming in, but approximately \$1800 was raised at the Craft Sale.

The final fundraiser of 2010 is still to come!! If you haven't attended **Laughter for the Arts** before, don't miss it this year! Garden parent and professional comedian Simon Cotter is ready with another stellar line-up of first rate comics to entertain us on **Tuesday, December 28th**. The night is an adult-only, rollicking fun community night at Hugh's Room – no driving necessary! Tickets are available in the school office or through Hugh's Room at the bargain price of \$25. We expect to raise \$4500 through LFTA, which is a significant portion of our annual fundraising goal. Please come, have an amazing time and support your school over the holidays!

Looking forward to 2011, we are **urgently in need** of a parent (or better yet, a group of parents) to organize our Silent Auction, as well as helping hands for the **Fun Fair**. The event is scheduled for **Saturday, May 28th**. It seems far away, but to pull off a huge event like this takes tons of planning - starting in January!

If you would like to be involved in fundraising, can help in a big or a small way, or have questions, please contact me anytime at [carole.reynolds@sutherlandmodels.com](mailto:carole.reynolds@sutherlandmodels.com)



Crafters displaying their handiwork at the November 25th Craft Fair.

## 2010 Cross Country Team by Mr S. Goetz, Teacher

The 2010 Garden Avenue Cross-Country team consisted of 39 students (23 primary and 16 junior) attending the West Conference Meet at Centennial Stadium on October 5<sup>th</sup>. We started practising the week of September 13<sup>th</sup> and ended October 1<sup>st</sup>. Two Garden students advanced to the City Finals!

The junior-aged students (grades 4, 5 and 6) met three days a week at 8:00

a.m. and jogged to High Park where the practice continued. It was a beautiful experience seeing the swans in the park and breathing the fresh morning air. A big 'thank you' to both Sonya Rolfe-Low and Jennifer Sutherland for running with the students and helping out with the coaching.

The primary-aged runners (grades 2 and 3) practiced twice a week

after school in our yard. A 'thank you' to Mrs. Baigent for running with and leading the grade 3 group in practices and her help at the meet. Even though it was hard work, practices in both divisions ended up being a lot of fun and filled students with a sense of accomplishment.

# Garden Avenue Music Notes

by Mrs. Linda Umezawa, Music Teacher

The first 'Garden Avenue Public School Night at the Opera' will take place on **Wednesday, January 26th** when 70 parents and students from our school will attend a dress rehearsal of the Canadian Opera Company's ***The Magic Flute***, by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, at the Four Seasons Centre. Tickets were sent home at the end of October. **Doors open at 6:30 pm**, and all are welcome to attend the **pre-show discussion about the opera at 6:45 pm** before the performance that begins at 7:30 pm.

Due to the enthusiastic response for this event, a block of 50 tickets has also been reserved for our school for the spring Canadian Opera Company dress rehearsal production of ***Cenorentola (Cinderella)*** by Gioacchino Rossini, on **Wednesday, April 26th at**

**7:30 pm**. Once again, tickets will cost \$15 each. Priority will be given to those families who could not get tickets to *The Magic Flute*. These families may purchase their tickets in the front foyer at school on **Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:45 am before the school day begins**. The remaining tickets will be placed on sale in the same manner for all other interested families on Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 8:45 am.

Our first school concert entitled '***Celestial Dreams***' will happen on **Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 am and 7:00 pm**. This concert involves our Primary classrooms as well as the Primary choir.

As a special launch for the opera program in our school community, we are extremely pleased to introduce coloratura soprano, Brooke Harris, as a guest performer at '*Celestial Dreams*'. Taking on the role of 'The Queen

of The Night' from 'The Magic Flute', Brooke will sing one of the most famous and challenging arias ever composed, '*The Vengeance Aria*', from Act II, Scene 6. Because she is a night owl, The Queen of the Night will not appear at the 9:15 am performance. Instead, Mrs. Andrea Gacich will entertain us on her clarinet. Other guest musicians expected to stop by and join in with the music making include: our own intrepid accompanist, Suzanne Davies-Knies; renowned pianist who will accompany The Queen of The Night, Lucas Porter; heavenly harpist, Koni Choi; guitarists Russell Wellner, Ms. Green and student teacher Michelle Eisen, and one soon to be favourite addition to the instructional team for the Orff/Recorder Club (hopefully) in January, Mack Polak, Mrs. Gacich's personal accompanist (and clarinet teacher). What a line up! We will have fun with you there!

## Celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the Spring Festival Concert

The TDSB Music Department is excited to invite all parents and community members to **A Gala Celebration of the 125th Annual Spring Festival Concert on January 20, 2011 at Hart House, University of Toronto**.

Every year the TDSB Music Department presents the Spring Festival Concert, a concert that highlights excellence in Music Programs in TDSB schools and includes 1000 elementary students. January's Gala pays tribute to the Spring Festival Concert, past, present, and future. The festive evening will include a reception, door prizes, live performances, guest speakers, and a silent auction. Proceeds from the silent auction will go to the Music Opportunity Fund of the Toronto Foundation for Student Success. Tickets are \$50. For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Paige Preston-Walker [paige.preston-walker@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:paige.preston-walker@tdsb.on.ca) or (416) 394-7394.

**Keep in the Loop** - Sign up for our weekly *Garden Avenews Direct* e-newsletter @ <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/gardenave>. And don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Twitter.



## Halloween Parade 2010

Superheroes, princesses, witches, vampires, and even a giant squid haunted the streets around Garden Avenue Public School on Friday, October 29th during the annual Halloween Parade. So many fantastic and original costumes, it was a wonderful display of the great creativity that makes our school spook-tacular!



# Chicks in the Class

by Charlotte R., Grade 6

One day Ms. Green told our class we were going to get eggs that at one point will hatch into chicks! We were VERY eggcited! Soon after we got 12 eggs and an incubator, and one day later we watched as Ms. Green numbered



and placed each egg in the incubator. We found out that we wouldn't know which eggs would hatch and which ones wouldn't. We also found out that it would take approximately 21 days before the eggs would start hatching.

On the 20th day we came into class to see one baby chick! Ms. Green said we couldn't hold it, but she did! That day one started hatching so we were

able to watch it happen. For a while it struggled but then pushed through. It was amazing to watch! The next day 6 were born! One struggled to get out of the egg and had to stay in the incubator. Soon it died. But we still had 7! Mrs. Baigent had 11 chicks hatch in her class, together we had 18! Four of our eggs didn't hatch, so we opened them. In 3 there was yolk, but in the 4th there was an embryo.

Soon enough we got to hold the chicks, and they were so fuzzy and soft to the touch. But the day came we had to say goodbye, as the chicks had to be sent back to the farm. We were sad to let them go but we had to. I say that having the chicks was a great time, and I will NEVER forget them!



## Celebrating Aboriginal Education Month

What a thrill it was on November 8 to host a performance of the Gonrah Degohwah White Pine Dancers at Garden Avenue! The members of the troupe come from a variety of First nations such as the Mohawk, Anishinabe and Ojibway nations. Ojibway storyteller, Aaron Bell, taught us about the history of the First Nations in Canada, the significance of the different costumes worn by the dancers, and the purpose of the different dances that were performed. He also enthralled us with the legend of 'How the Bear came to have a short tail and walk

on four legs'. The performance was topped off by an opportunity for selected students and staff to learn and perform a traditional dance. Students and staff were engrossed by the performance from beginning to end. Sincere thanks go to our parent community through the Parent Council who provided the funding for this very educational performance. Nya Weh!



# News from the Library

by Becky Jenkins, Teacher-Librarian

## The 'New' Library Website

This fall, the TDSB's Department of Library, Learning Resources & Interdisciplinary Studies unveiled the newly revamped Library Website. Each school has its own link to a version of either the elementary or secondary template. Through our Garden Library website, students, staff and parents can access an extensive array of online resources, both for research purposes as well as for presenting and sharing the results of their research. You can visit our website at:

**<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/libraries/links.asp?schoolNo=5231>**

We expect our school library to contain print resources with reliable information that are appropriate in reading level and content for elementary students. It only makes sense that when students seek information online that they have access to equally high-quality resources that they can read independently. Such resources are available to our students in the form of online encyclopedia and educational databases. These cannot be accessed through a Google search. They are available by subscription only, which has been paid for by the TDSB. By choosing to access these resources you can be assured that the information is

reliable and more likely to be at a reading level that is accessible to your child. (Many of the resources include the reading level of the articles presented and some have an option for the student to hear the article being read aloud.)

Garden Staff have had the opportunity to have an overview of the new website. Students are encouraged to use the library website for their studies. At school, they can freely access all parts of the website. From home, subscription sites will require a password. These have been made available to students on a special bookmark. If you have any questions about the TDSB online resources or would like an extra copy of the passwords, please contact Ms. Jenkins.

## Forest of Reading

The Forest of Reading is a readers' choice award program organized by the OLA (Ontario Library Association). It includes the Blue Spruce program, which are read-alouds for students from kindergarten to grade 2; and the Silver Birch Programs – fiction, non-fiction and express (a mix of fiction and non-fiction at an easier reading level) for students in grades 3 to 6. The nominees were announced at the end of October. Reading continues until late April, when the students vote for their favourite book and the winners are announced at celebration ceremonies at Harbourfront in May.

Sincere thanks go to the Garden community through the Parent



Council who have purchased the books needed to run these worthwhile programs which introduce our students to some of the best of Canadian children's literature.

While the Silver Birch club will officially get underway right away in the new year, interested students may begin reading at any time (titles are also available through the public library). The official nominees are posted outside our school library and more information may be found at:

**<http://www.accessola.com/forest2011/>**

## Scholastic Book Fair

This year's Book Fair was the most successful yet! With the generous support of parents, students and staff, we raised over \$3,000 in Scholastic credits, which will be used to purchase new resources for all of the classrooms as well as the library. It was very gratifying this year to see so many of the children choosing books over any of the other Scholastic products that were available at the fair. A special thanks to the parents and staff who volunteered their time to set up, man and tear down the fair. Without this help, the book fair could not have been the success that it was!

# Introducing...

There are many faces around Garden Avenue School, and we are not all familiar with them. For this reason we are pleased to present our newest feature where we will profile a teacher or parent that is making a difference in our school. For our very first instalment, we are happy to "introduce" our outstanding music and special education teacher, **Mrs. Linda Umezawa!**



**Where did you go to school/grow up?**

I grew up in St. Albert, AB, and relocated to Toronto with my husband in 1987.

**Do you have any brothers or sisters?**

I have 2 older sisters and 1 younger brother. They live in Alberta with their families.

**What is your favourite lunch?**

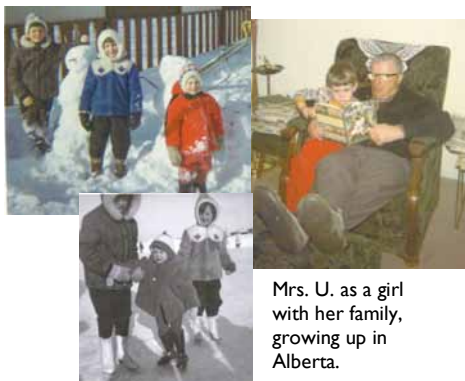
My favourite lunch is sashimi and a little bit of miso soup. If my morning has involved dancing and playing games with the Kindergarten students, I will also order a bowl of rice. I am thrilled to know that Vincent's has finally opened a restaurant and I spend way too much time there.

**Best book you read in 2010:**

My favourite books are the ones that other people pass on to me. I learn a lot about friends and family from the books they loan me to read. The most memorable read for me this year was a book my mother passed on to me, "The Book of Negroes" by Lawrence Hill. Before reading this book I did not know the story of how the freed slaves from the United States migrated from Nova Scotia back to Sierra Leone. I found myself completely immersed in this book and wished at the end that it could have continued on. It is so rich!

**Favourite childhood book?**

'Hansel and Gretel'. My Italian grandfather used to read this book to my brother, sisters and me over and over on the weekends when we visited him. I loved the way his Italian accent made the book sound. He could make Hansel and Gretel's situation sound so pathetic and his spin on the wicked witch was award-



Mrs. U. as a girl with her family, growing up in Alberta.

worthy. My favourite children's book author is Ezra Jack Keats because in my opinion, few authors can match his ability to capture the awareness and sensibilities of very young children. As a 5 year old, when my teacher read 'The Snowy Day' to my class, we went outside afterwards and made our first snow angels. Talk about a Snow to Text connection!

**Favourite song or music listened to most in 2010?**

Every member of my family has different tastes and we take turns playing our iPods on our home docking station so everyone tends to develop interests in everything we listen to. Over the past couple of years, I have become particularly interested in children's choral music. My favourite composers and arrangers are currently John Govedas ('Ise The Bye', 'Cowboy Lullaby'), Rollo Dillworth ('Sunset', 'Two Tigers') and Ruth Elaine Schram ('Jibuli Jibul').

**Do you play a musical instrument?**

I studied piano while growing up and wrote music as a hobby. I later performed as the piano player and singer in a number of bands. We played our music throughout the Edmonton area at all types of venues and for all sorts of events. I stopped when we moved to Toronto and started our

family because the evenings tend to be very late for musicians. Since living in Toronto, I have worked on a few demo recordings that happen during the day. This city is filled with so many talented and exciting performers. These occasions have been lots of fun!

**Do you have any pets or a favourite animal?**

We are not at home enough to have a pet now, but in the past we have had a rabbit, turtles, a hamster and budgie birds. Someday I hope we can get a dog - a big galoot of a dog.

**What is your favourite winter activity?**

Because I am from Alberta where the winters are a lot longer, my favourite activities are winter activities. I love to skate and downhill ski. As a youngster I enjoyed playing hockey at school. Snowmobiling at the cottage was always a lot of fun, especially when a hot dog roast or ice fishing was waiting at the destination.

**Number of years "at" Garden: 4**

**Most outstanding memory at Garden School?**

I love teaching at Garden because everyone is so friendly and supportive. In my time at this school there have been too many highlights to recount. I am always excited to put the season together for our choirs. My favourite choir memory is probably our performance at the Ministry of Education last December. This was before we split into two choirs so everyone was present. I was so proud of all of the students. It was such a privilege to be able to present the Garden Avenue students at that event. They just sparkled throughout the entire performance.