

Garden Avenews



Produced by the Garden Avenue School Advisory Council

spring 2008

Chair's Message

We are in the home stretch of another fabulous year at Garden! Many, many thanks to everyone who has helped out—it has been a wonderful year of collaboration between staff and parents! At Garden we wouldn't be able to do what we do without the help of everyone. That said, there are a few people I would like to acknowledge for their tremendous contributions. Thank you to Allyson McGreal, Michelle Martindale and Carole Reynolds for the tireless hours they put into creating our most successful Fun Fair yet! Thank you to Marci Becker for her ongoing commitment to pizza lunches! Thank you to Mary Cuyllle, the leader of our playground committee and champion of the Rock Circle! Thank you to Kristen Taylor who put together a wonderful story-telling evening!

Thank you to Melissa Ogilvie-McKinley and Tanya Kakei for organizing the successful Kindergarten and Grade One orientation nights! And we're grateful to Melissa for the ongoing updates to our new school sign.



I also wanted to say a very special thank you to Margaret McIntosh for all of her many wonderful contributions to Garden Ave P.S. Margaret joined Garden only 18 months ago, but it has been an action packed year and a half. From the 50th Anniversary celebrations to all-school field trips, from the potlucks to the many school performances, Margaret has been an enthusiastic and collaborative partner. She is always ready and willing to work alongside Council and staff to bring our vibrant school calendar to life. I am not sure of a greater testament to her commitment to the school than her willingness to go into the dunk tank two years in a row at the Fun Fair! We will certainly miss Margaret, her warm smile, her positive attitude and her unwavering commitment to doing what is best

WELCOME!

At the Toronto District School Board Meeting on May 21st, Martha Peterson, Vice-Principal of Clairville School was promoted to Principal of Garden Avenue School beginning September 2008. Ms. Peterson comes with a solid background in literacy and is a strong advocate for special needs students. One of her passions is the ongoing development of school, parent and community partnerships. She believes small schools are the glue that keep communities strong and provide a sounding board for the families within them. In speaking to Ms. Peterson, she wanted to let Garden parents and staff know how much she is looking forward to meeting them and that her door will always be open.

A very warm Garden welcome to Martha Peterson!

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Chair's Message

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for the children. We wish her well in her retirement and this exciting new phase of her life.

Our June Council meeting is a General Meeting and everyone is welcome to attend and participate. We will be thanking our volunteers, reviewing this year's activities and starting plans for the 2008/09 school year. If you'd like to participate and/or learn more about what the Council does, please join us June 18 at 6:30pm. Childcare will be available.

Call for nominations for the 2008/09 School Council Executive! We will be holding elections for our 08/09 School Council Executive at our June General Council Meeting. If you are interested in joining the executive please contact me at jenn_sutherland@rogers.com or 416.537.1335 by June 11, 2008.

I hope everyone has a wonderful June. I look forward to seeing you June 10 at the Spring Concert.

*Jenn Sutherland, Chair
Garden Ave School Advisory
Council 2007-2008*

We're Erasing Prejudice for Good

The equity program 'We're Erasing Prejudice for Good' continues at Garden. Some of the ways that classes demonstrated their understanding of the theme over the winter months:

- Miss King's class created acoustic poems about a variety of Children's Rights and then used different art media to illustrate their rights and responsibilities.
- Mrs. Baigent's class explored the theme of Caring Hands by completing projects on the Underground Railroad.
- Mr. McClure's class was Untying the Knots of Prejudice by learning about children's games from around the world and the Right to Play with demonstrations of fair play at school.
- Ms. Chawla's class performed a variety of dramatic pieces to teach us about



what we can do to be good citizens.

To the left are the recipients of the 'We're Erasing Prejudice for Good' certificates.

Room No.	January Children's Rights	February Caring Hands	March Untying the Knots of Prejudice	April Local & Global Citizenship
101	Cameron	Campbell	Nathaniel	Zohra
102	Lucy	Angelina	Charlotte	Lexus
103	Chloe	Avery K.	Mihail	Rebecca
104 am	Keith	Briththeke	Avery C.	Rhys
104 pm	Alex V.	Spencer P.	Lila	Evan
106 am	Justin	Dylan E.	Michael	Sean
106 pm	Molly	Chloe P.	Logan	William
203	Sophie C.	Kyle	Zoe	Olivia T.
204	Fatima	Charlotte R.	Jack M.	Katie
205	Szymon	Yesi	Mimi	Rakavi
206	Carmela	Aicha	Shounak	Nicole G-J
207	Spencer H-M	Frankie	Milana	Dillon



May 13 — Junior girls soccer tournament



Jump Rope for Heart

Principal's Message

What a wonderful year it has been at Garden Avenue. Our 50th Anniversary year has given us the opportunity to look both backwards into the past and forward into the future, and when we do we recognize a diverse rich community with roots in many parts of the world.

While our community is certainly changing, it very much reflects the demographic changes in Toronto over the last 50 years and the patterns of immigration and settlement. It also reflects the fact that this is a very livable community with vibrant local businesses, good transportation, a range of excellent school program options, churches, recreational facilities and wonderful green space. Families want to live here, and when they are here they want to stay.

The Parkdale/High Park community, like many Toronto communities, is home to many different demographic, economic, ethnic and cultural communities. It is an inclusive community with many opportunities for involvement. We mirror that at Garden Avenue School. Many of our students' families' roots are in those immigrant communities of the last 60 years and more—English, Irish, Portuguese, Italian, Polish, Ukrainian, German, Indian, Sri Lankan, Chinese, Japanese, Tibetan, Caribbean, Guyanese, Ecuadorean, and many others.

My own life as an immigrant in Toronto started in this school community. Wright Avenue was our first address in Canada as a

young family from Scotland arriving after the Second World War. It is a fitting place for me to retire. The community that was the beginning of our new life in Canada is now the place where I will close out this very important chapter—and who knows what child of immigrants might be Principal for the 75th anniversary!

It has been a wonderful one-and-a-half years for me with terrific memories, from the first potluck I attended, to singing the national anthem at the Blue Jays game, the 50th Anniversary celebrations, wonderful concerts, amazing Fun Fairs and special events. But the best truly is the day-to-day life of working with exemplary teachers doing their best for students every day in a caring, supportive parent community. It couldn't be better than that for a Principal.

My focus as a Principal has always been to support the best efforts of the staff in teaching the whole child and further developing their own skills, as well as fostering innovation, encouraging parent involvement, being available for problem solving, and modeling and developing strong, collaborative and trusting relationships. Garden staff and parents appear to share some of my priorities and that has made working here such a joy.

Garden will go into the 2008/09 school year with a new Principal, a stable experienced staff, a skilled and active School Council, wonderful students and a commitment to this small school. The future looks bright!

Margaret McIntosh



FUNDRAISING/ TREASURER'S REPORT

by Mary Cuyllle

Once again Garden Avenue has had an amazing year in terms of fundraising efforts. Money raised through the School Council this year was used to support many programs offered to our students including the storytelling evening, the Silver Birch author visit and the pottery workshops. So far this year the school has raised \$22,540.98.

Our success would not be possible without the support of all those who volunteered their time throughout the year. Thank you for a fabulous year!

Open House Bake Sale	\$591.60
Chapters Book Sale	\$410.81
Craft Fair	\$2 190.53
Pizza Lunches	\$693.27
Laughter For The Arts	\$4 629.86
Fun Fair	\$11 739.18
Parents Reaching Out Grant	\$1 000.00
Rock Circle	\$519.15
TOTAL	\$22 540.98

GARDEN GROWS PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE

Spring has arrived and the playground committee has been busy cleaning up the school grounds. The Heritage Garden has been mulched and thanks to Mr. McClure a few new plants have been added. The bulbs that were planted in the fall in honour of Garden's 50th Anniversary have bloomed and add a rainbow of colour to the front entrance of the school.

The "Garden Rocks" campaign continues to gain momentum. Throughout the year we have had jelly bean guesses and 50-50 draws, as well as our first annual impatiens sale. We are getting closer and closer to our goal of \$5000. Check out the model in the front foyer that was built by students in Mrs. Gacich's class.

Thanks to all those who have supported our efforts to get our school gardens growing!

If any parents are interested in joining the playground committee, please contact Mary Cuyllé at 416.531.6059 or at cuyllé@rogers.com.



Garden Avenue Music Notes

by Linda Umezawa, Music Teacher

You are cordially invited to join us at the Garden Avenue Public School Spring Concert!

DATE: Tuesday, June 10 (Rain date: Wednesday, June 11)

START TIME: 6:30 p.m.

Students should arrive 15 minutes early – see below for drop-off locations.

LOCATION: Outdoors in the Garden Avenue P.S. playground.

Please bring a ground sheet, picnic blanket or lawn chairs for your family to sit on.

As students finish their performances, they will join their families to view the remainder of the show.

COSTUMES

If possible, please have your child dressed in the following attire:

Students in JK/SK/Grade 1 – red and/or white t-shirts and denim bottoms.

Students in Grades 2/3 and 3/4 (Ms. Baigent, Ms. Gacich and Mr. McClure's classes) – bright solid-coloured t-shirts (any colour) and denim bottoms.

Students in Grades 4/5, 5/6 and JISP (Ms. Chawla, Ms. Green and Ms. Lawson classes) – basketball jersey, a sports shirt or any t-shirt with a number on it with track pants or sports shorts and runners

Choir - Solid coloured t-shirts of any colour and denim bottoms.

CONCERT PROGRAM

JK/SK/Grade 1 - Songs about Canada

Grades 2/3 and 3/4 - Show Tunes

Grades 4/5, 5/6 and JISP - Sports rap and 'half time' partner song

Choir - Medley of songs from "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat"

The World Drum Group and the Strings Ensemble will also perform.

BEFORE THE CONCERT

- Students please use the washroom before leaving home.
- Arrival time: 6:15 p.m. sharp.
- With the exception of strings instrument players, all students should report to the room of the first performance group listed below who they will appear with. After their performance, they should then report to the room of their next performance.
 - JK/SK/Grade 1: Regular classrooms
 - Grades 2/3 and 3/4: Regular classrooms
 - Strings*: Library
 - Grades 4/5, 5/6, JISP classes: Regular classrooms
 - Choir: Gym
 - World Drumming: Gym
- * Any strings players should tune their string instruments in Room 105 before reporting to Room 103.

Please visit Garden Avenue Public School's healthy snack table immediately following the performance.

Thanks for your wonderful support of the music program this year at Garden.

See you at the concert!

Forest of Reading

@ Garden Ave Library

by Becky Jenkins, Teacher-Librarian

The Blue Spruce and Silver Birch Programs sponsored by the Ontario Library Association were, once again, big hits at Garden.

Blue Spruce Author Frieda Wishinsky

All students in Grades K to 2 enjoyed being read the 10 picture books that were nominated in the Blue Spruce Category. As part of the program, the primary students were treated to an author visit. Frieda Wishinsky, the author of a 2008 Blue Spruce Nominee *Please, Louise!*, shared with the students how everyday events, like what happens when you get up in the morning or on your way to school, can be made into interesting stories by using your imagination and sense of humour. Frieda got the audience involved by inviting students to participate as she read her stories. Echoing repeated phrases and supplying rhyming words kept the children engaged. It was a pleasure to have Frieda visit us at Garden.

Silver Birch Club: Online!

The Silver Birch Club met from January to April and, along with reading their Silver Birch books, students were delighted to be able to access an online component to the program. Club members were able to contribute to a listserv organized by title, post to a blog where several Silver Birch authors participated along with students from across the

TDSB, and explore the Forest of Reading website to learn more about this year's nominees.

Queen Elizabeth II at Garden Library

The Silver Birch program got off to a great start as we welcomed Queen Elizabeth II to our library. The Queen talked to the junior students about the trials and tribulations of daily life for royal children. The Queen then magically transformed into, none other than, Charis Cotter—author of *Kids Who Rule*, nominated in the Non-Fiction Category, and aunt extraordinaire to three Garden students. The children learned a lot about the life of historical child rulers and they were even able to teach Charis a thing or two, when it came to one of the rulers, the Dalai Lama. Charis kept things hopping with a lively game that tested the students listening skills and retention of the facts she presented. The winning team was given a 'royal bow' by the rest of the contestants.

April 23 – Voting Day

Twenty-eight Silver Birchers read at least the minimum number of books required (5) in order to cast their ballot. There were even a number of students who read all ten selections in their chosen category. A special 'well-done' to Lauren C., Bryn, Katie, Emilia, and Clare who read all ten books in their chosen Silver Birch program. Lauren and Katie, were such avid readers that they

qualified to vote in two categories.

As for the results? It should come as no surprise that Silver Birch Non-Fiction was much more popular at Garden this year compared to last, and when the votes were cast, *Kids Who Rule* ruled in the Non-Fiction Category.

In the Express Category, *Things are Looking Grimm, Jill!* tied with *Lucky's Mountain*, while the Fiction Category had a tie between *The Secret of Grim Hill* and *Jakeman*.

On voting day, each and every Kindergarten to Grade 2 student made their way to the library to cast their vote for their favourite Blue Spruce book. Garden's clear winner was Melanie Watt's *Scaredy Squirrel Makes a Friend*.

All votes from Garden were entered electronically into the Forest of Reading virtual ballot box and then the votes from across Ontario were tabulated, with the winners announced at the Awards Ceremonies on May 21 and 22.

Silver Birch Awards at Harbourfront May 22

As a reward for their participation, students who were eligible to vote were invited to attend this event. Some of our Express Readers were invited to participate in the ceremony itself.

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Spring Fun Fair *by Carole Reynolds*

The annual Garden Fun Fair was our biggest and best ever!



The weather cooperated once again, and we were lucky enough to have a beautiful, sunny day. The biggest attraction once again was the dunk tank, which had a big crowd around it all day long hoping to dunk Mrs McIntosh, Mr Goetz and Mrs Gacich among others! Kids of all ages enjoyed our newest fun fair event—old fashioned races, complete with participant and winner ribbons, courtesy of Allyson McGreal.



Michelle Martindale organized lots of games in the gym to enjoy, and the bigger kids had a riot with the inflatable jousting and the much-loved “Ring the Pop”. Not to mention the Toonie Jar Sale, which had line-ups waiting before the fair even started at 10 am! Don’t forget to make a jar (or two!) next year so that no one goes home disappointed!

The Victorian Tea Room was bustling all day long with Marci Becker’s treats, Daniel Campbell’s delicious cappuccino, and live entertainment provided by the



RoncesGals. If you couldn’t find what you wanted in the tea room, you could find it at the very busy Snack Bar where the Doyles went through a record number of hot dogs keeping everyone full and happy.

Once again the hallway was jam-packed with many amazing Silent Auction items, including four gorgeous Muskoka chairs designed and painted by our talented parents and children, and a fabulous mural created by Mrs Bell’s class. The first ever Glendale Book Club Sale supplied many with summer reading, thanks to Melissa Ogilvie-McKinley and the rest of the Glendale Readers, and the ever-popular raffle baskets sold a record number of tickets with kids filling out ballots all day long.

Only 11 months until the NEXT Fun Fair, get ready!





From Our Students

by Mrs. McIntosh

Many of our students have families that immigrated to Canada and/or speak another language at home. I took the opportunity to ask some of our Garden Grade 5 & 6 students some questions. Together these students represent 9 different countries and 7 different languages. They shared with me the following responses:

Why did your family come to Toronto?

"To live better and work hard."

"For a better job and we have relatives here."

"My dad got a job offer."

"There were lots of wars and not enough food to eat. Toronto is safe."

"Because there was a war in Ireland."

"Sri Lanka has lots of wars – my relatives all come here."

"I have relatives in Toronto."

"Canada has good education and freedom."

"My grandfather chose Toronto because his friends were here and his kids could have a better education."

Do you speak another language at home?

Italian and Portuguese • Serbian • Tamil • Spanish • A little Urdu

What do you like best about your culture?

"I like my language, land and my roots." (Ecuador)

"The amazing dances and spicy foods." (Sri Lanka)

"The music." (Ireland)

"Beautiful classical dances, movies and songs, the gods and goddesses, interesting special days and holidays like Diwali, Thai Pongal and many more special events that are cool." (Sri Lanka)

"I like the capital of Serbia, Belgrade." (Serbia)

"The soccer team and all the wonderful foods they have." (Italy, Portugal)

"They have good food in Pakistan, Irish people are friendly and I like the souvlaki in Greece."

(background from 3 countries)

With thanks to Frankie, Brandon, Thevesan, Kajeetha, Abinaya, Milana, Dillon, Miranda, and Zohra for sharing.

Forest of Reading *continues from page 5*

Excitement ran high as the 27 Garden students who had voted for their favourite Silver Birch book, made their way to Harbourfront on May 22. They were on their way to the awards celebration to find out if their favourite Silver Birch nominee had received enough votes from across the province in order to win the Fiction, Non-Fiction or Express award. Each strand had its own ceremony. When the votes were tallied, *The Secret of Grim Hill* by Linda DeMeulemeester won the Fiction category, *Secret Agent Y.O.U.* by Helaine Becker won the Non-Fiction category, and Dan Bar-el

won for *Things are Looking Grimm, Jill* in the Express category.

Garden Avenue P.S. was proud to have 3 students represent us at the Express Awards. Mimi M. and Katie G. served as sign carriers for two of the Express authors, and Lauren C. proudly presented Ellen Schwartz, author of *Yossi's Goal*.

All the Silver Birchers enjoyed a variety of workshops, games and activities at the celebrations, and hopefully they will look forward to participating in the Silver Birch program again next year.



Sunnyside
Garden
Daycare

NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & DAYCARE FAMILY NIGHT –THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 6:00 PM

Following the AGM and discussion of new bylaws governing the daycare board, there will be a BBQ. To help us prepare for this event, please let us know the number of family members that are planning to attend.

NURSERY SCHOOL AND PRESCHOOL GRADUATION

On Thursday, June 19, at 5:30 pm, we will have our graduation party to celebrate the children's growth and accomplishments over the past daycare year. The children will receive their diplomas at this time. Afterwards, there will be light refreshments and a graduation cake will be served. Parents and families are welcome to attend. Remember to bring your cameras!

SUMMER DAYCARE PROGRAM

The preschool and school age programs are finalizing plans for the summer field trips and in house sessions. Due to the increased popularity of the summer programs, please be sure to return your forms and fees promptly to ensure that your child has a confirmed spot for the summer.

DAYCARE FEES

New daycare fees and terms are in effect from July 1, 2008 until June 30, 2009. Information sheets will be posted by the daycare rooms, and copies are available in our most recent newsletter. Please remember that daycare fees are due the first of each month.

DATES TO REMEMBER

June 20 - Last day of Nursery School

July 1 - daycare closed

August 4 (Simcoe Day), Aug 11-15 - daycare closed

Life at Garden—Our Global Village

by Melissa Ogilvie-McKinley

When I was asked if I would write an article for this newsletter, I had to stop and think about in which direction I would go that would best articulate my profound appreciation for my family's experiences at Garden Avenue Public School. It is without question that Garden school has a diverse and culturally rich demographic, but it is so evident when I go back in time and think about the school I went to as a child. I was born and brought up in Halifax, Nova Scotia and went to a school in the heart of the city. It was a great school, but much like the city itself, was extremely homogenous in its population. As the mother of two girls who were adopted from China, I reflect on what their experiences would be like if they went to my old school. They would likely be one of the only racial minorities, but would also probably be two of the only adopted children in the whole school. When I think of how that experience could shape a different 'sense of self' in my girls, I feel extremely blessed to be in Toronto and especially to be at our wonderful school.

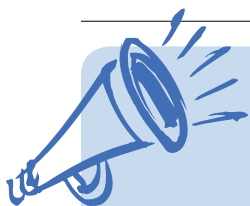
My eldest daughter Mimi is in Grade 4. Since Kindergarten, she has



been in class with one of her closest friends, Sarah who is also adopted from China. Every year they have had teachers who have gone out of their way to make sure that they are given an opportunity to celebrate Chinese holidays such as Chinese New Year, their family days (the day we all became a family), as well as to express in any way their thoughts, feelings and experiences as a child who is adopted. I must say though, rarely has 'adoption' or being 'racially different' from her parents really ever been an issue for Mimi or for any of her school mates. That says so much about the school—the teachers, principals, and community of parents that surround the children every day foster an environment of acceptance and peace. In every class

there is an amazing collection of nationalities, religions and familial backgrounds. It makes for a great mosaic view of the world for the children which they will carry with them their whole lives—what more could we ask for as parents and as a community?

As one of at least 8 families that I know of who have children who are adopted from China at the school, I think I can speak for all of us when I say that our great diverse neighbourhood and our wonderful little school serves the children and all of us as parents in the most profound ways. The children and parents of children who have been adopted from China have an amazing relationship with each other; we communicate outside the school on all kinds of topics relating to our children but many of the biggest obstacles we worried (and still worry) about are gently allayed by the fact that each day our children enter the doors of an amazingly accepting and thoughtful school that doesn't have to try to be 'sensitive' because the make up of the school couldn't possibly make anyone feel unaccepted or unwanted based on race.



QSP Reminder Please wait to renew your magazine subscriptions through our annual campaign in early October. If you need to order earlier, you may do so online at www.qsp.ca and still support our school. Thanks!



The Making of a Documentary

by Ms. Chawla

The students in Ms. Chawla's Grade 4/5 class have been working on a documentary about the anti-Semitic graffiti that was found on the outside walls of Garden Avenue Public School. The film focuses on important issues relating to racism, tolerance and peace building.

Two parents have made great contributions and have volunteered their time towards this project. Marta Nielsen has done an amazing job filming and editing hours of footage

DELL MEMORIAL GARDEN

It's spring once again and our garden is growing! Mary Cuyllé and her group of gardeners have been hard at work weeding, mulching and planting the garden on the east side of the school. If you have not had a close look at the garden, drop by! There are many native species growing, with an enticing path of stepping stones leading the way through the garden.



for a final cut. Daniel Campbell is another parent who has helped bring this project to fruition and helped students film this documentary. Ms. Chawla and the students would really like to thank these two volunteers for all their hard work in helping to create this documentary.

The documentary will premiere at the school on Tuesday, June 17 at 11:00 a.m. in the gym.

Students were involved in anti-racist education learning in the classroom through a variety of activities. Ms. Chawla's students read *Hana's Suitcase* by Karen Levine and completed a novel study based on this book. The students also wrote poetry about the real Holocaust victims in the book, some who are now living in Toronto!

"I learned that the Jewish people got treated badly during the Holocaust... I learned it is not a celebration..."
Daphne R.

The class has also learned about empathy. As Sarah J. said, "Empathy is putting yourself in someone's shoes. We sometimes need to do this because it makes us feel what pain or difficulties someone might be experiencing. We all demonstrated empathy by imagining we were Hana from the book and had to choose one thing that was important to us and place it in our classroom suitcase. We explained why the item was important to us and why it would

be difficult to leave home. We learned many Jewish children during World War II experienced being forced out of their home and sent to a concentration camp."

Students worked on a poetry activity in which they wrote about the positive attributes of a classmate. From this activity students learned that all people have unique characteristics and it is important to bring out the positive in everyone. "Ms. Chawla wanted us to find out what is special and great about our friends. Many people think about only themselves, but by doing this activity we learn about others," remarked Sarah J.

Students also completed a program hosted by the University of Toronto called Peace by Peace which focused on team-building and working together. Through their participation, students learned ways of finding win-win situations to a conflict. At the program's close, they celebrated with other TDSB students at the Toronto Convention Centre as part of the culminating Peace Festival celebration. This was an important component that taught the student's about compassion and working collaboratively.

"I thought it was a good program because I learned how to handle problems without using bad words. It was a lot of fun because we played lots of games where everybody worked together," remarked Mimi M.

New for September 2008: Nutritious Snack Program

by Becky Jenkins for the Nutrition Committee

“We are indeed much more than what we eat, but what we eat can nevertheless help us to be much more than what we are.” —ADELLE DAVIS, PIONEERING NUTRITIONIST

The Toronto District School Board, through its Nutrition Foundation Statement recognizes the direct relationship between healthy nutrition and the academic achievement of our students. As such, it supports the implementation and development of student nutrition programs. Through partnerships with Toronto Public Health and the Toronto Foundation for Student Success—whose goal it is to establish student nutrition programs in all schools—TDSB schools have access to funding to help get student nutrition programs off the ground.

At Garden, as part of our ‘Toronto Schools on the Move’ initiative, the Health Action Committee incorporated a nutrition component in our plan of action for 2007-08. The Nutrition Committee, made up of parents, school and daycare staff as well as our Public Health nurse, moved forward with this plan to implement a whole school snack program to begin in late September.

When the program begins, a whole-school snack will be served on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The snack will be shared in-class before recess. It will provide a

variety of learning opportunities for students in a wide range of curriculum areas. It will also encourage a sense of community within each class through the communal activity of sharing food together.

On the evening of the spring concert please join some of the members of the Nutrition Committee to sample some nutritious snacks and to learn more about this program.

Look for detailed information regarding the snack program in September 2008!

Easing the Transition *by Tanya Kakei*

A Day in the Life of a Grade One Student

On Monday, May 5, Garden held its second annual Grade One Orientation meeting for parents of SK children. We were really pleased with the great turn out. The purpose of the meeting was to give parents some insight into how busy a day can be for a Grade One student and all the changes that go on. The goal was to relieve some of the stress from parents as they prepare their children and themselves for their first full day in September. It was a great opportunity for parents to ask questions and open the lines of communication for any further concerns that may arise. It was also a

chance to meet other parents that are dealing with similar issues.

Among the many topics discussed were: how and when the children enter the building throughout the day; how often the children change their clothes and shoes; first term focus on routines and making friends; ideas for preparing for lunch/snacks, whether staying at school or going home; and some suggestions for the first term and for the summer.

For those parents who were unable to attend the meeting, you are welcome to request a copy of the handout from the office.



Pottery making in Mrs. Baigent's class

WORLD MUSIC CIRCLE

by Giggs Russell

WOW – Did you hear our Garden students on CBC Radio? They were fabulous! CBC’s “The Current” recently visited and recorded several interviews with our WMC students for their show on how boys and girls make choices about musical instruments.

Several students talked about why they like drumming while all of our WMC students could be heard singing and drumming in the background. These were the only children featured on the (pre-recorded) show and we are very proud of all of them.

To learn more about which instruments appeal more to females (piano), and which to males (guitar), and which are gender neutral (French horn, drums) and why, go to <http://www.cbc.ca/thecurrent/2008/200805/20080505.html>. If you just want to hear the Garden Avenue student interviews and music, start listening at approximately 8 minutes into part three. It lasts about 2 minutes and gives our school two mentions.

Also, you’ll want to catch the WMC performance at the Spring Concert on June 10th. All of the students currently enrolled in the WMC will perform at the concert. They’ve been practising hard, with the older students taking a leadership role in teaching and mentoring the younger ones.

Ward 7 Report

by Liz Johnston-Hill

A number of important issues have been discussed at the Ward 7 Education Council meetings this year.

Good News!

This edition of Garden Avenews has been funded by Ontario’s Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Grants. PRO projects are intended to facilitate better communication between the school, parents and the community.

Pool Update

As many of you know, the TDSB has decided to close 23 school pools, including one at Fern Avenue P.S., this June. The funding formula used by the Ministry of Education does not provide financial support for pools. At this time, the TDSB is hoping to find an alternative sustainable funding solution.

Homework Policy

After extensive consultation, TDSB Trustees approved a new homework policy to be implemented in September 2008. The new version builds on the existing policy and reinforces homework as an engaging and relevant learning activity.

GAPP

The General Asset Program & Planning Process has been adopted by the TDSB to help the board determine how to best invest in programs, services and schools over a multi-year period of up to 10 years.

For more in-depth information on these issues, please visit the TDSB’s website at www.tdsb.on.ca.

Storytime at Garden

by Kristin Taylor

Garden Avenue’s annual storytelling evening was held Thursday, April 10. Almost 100 children, split in four groups of about 25, spent time with two of the four storytellers who came to tell tales, sing songs and weave their magic. **Andrew Larsen** and **sommer m** were new to the Garden Avenue tradition and engaged the younger children with stories of *Bella and the Bunny* and *Anansi*. **Dan Yashinsky** and **Lorne Brown** were

delighted to return to spin their yarns. We were equally delighted to have the opportunity to spend time with them again.

Many thanks to Marci Becker for providing healthy snacks for families wishing to grab a bite before the stories began, and to Jenn Sutherland and Margaret McIntosh for ironing out all the logistics.

