

Garden Avenews



Produced by the Garden Avenue School Council

late spring 2005

What We Did Before Going on Summer Vacation

Catherine Marjoribanks, School Council Chair

It's been a great year for the Garden Avenue School Council. Looking back over the events of 2004-2005 reminds me of what a wonderful school we have, and how much we count on the energy and enthusiasm that so many of our parents contribute to it! Whether you are volunteering in your child's classroom, helping out with a fundraiser, or just helping another family feel at home at Garden, you all make an important contribution to our school community.

Our School Council members have been busy this year, and I'd like to thank everyone who put their time and energy into Council-sponsored activities.

After a lot of hard work behind the scenes, we finally got our new trees planted in the playground this fall, and it's wonderful to see their new spring leaves for the first time! Thanks to Jeff Hanning and our Garden Grows Group for their expertise and persistence!

A new program that's just getting off the ground this year is our Drumming Group. A group of enthusiastic parents has been learning to play our beautiful new Djembe drums and will soon be passing these skills on to our students. Thanks to Craig Tsuji and Mary Cuyllé for getting the group up and running and providing leadership.

Thanks to our organizer, Jenn Sutherland, and to everyone who joined us for the 3rd Annual Story-Telling Evening – this year there were more of us than ever. One hundred children and their families came to Garden on April 21st to hear the stories of: Jeffrey Canton, Lorne Brown,

Sally Jaegar and Rukhsana Khan. It was a magical evening.

Thanks to Melissa Ogilvie-McKinley for her work on our very welcoming Kindergarten Orientation program. We all hope our newest students will feel at home here next year!

Thanks also to Janice Roberts for her beautiful design work on this year's newsletters, and for putting together our new school website, coming soon! The new website will be a terrific source of information for parents about school policies and procedures and the ongoing work of the School Council, and it will give us one more way to stay in touch with Garden parents.

Thanks, of course, to all our Council Executive, including: our Secretary, Mary Cuyllé; our Treasurer, Kathleen Morrissey; our Volunteer Co-ordinator, Jenn Sutherland; teacher reps Karen Green and Lindy King; and our Principal, Craig Tsuji. Thanks to everyone who came out to our meetings when they would rather have stayed home!

And to all Garden parents, a big thanks from me in my final year as School Council Chair. It's been a pleasure and an honour to work with you all and to represent you in the community. I look forward next year to having more time to volunteer in the classroom (look out, Grade 6) and throwing my two cents in about Council business from time to time!



WHAT MAKES A SCHOOL COMMUNITY STRONG?

We are grateful again this year for all the help and support that Garden students and parents have received from our hard working and dedicated staff – our administration, teachers, educational assistants, custodians, lunchroom supervisors, and everyone else who keeps our school running smoothly. Special thanks to Craig Tsuji, who tackled his new job with great enthusiasm, thanks in no small part to the unfailing support of Luba Andrews. Our team at Garden works hard to meet the needs of our students and to help them get the most out of their school experience. We may not say it often enough, but we really appreciate how often you guys go the extra mile. Thanks for another great year!

UPCOMING EVENTS



DENTAL SCREENING

DATE: JUNE 13-15

SCHOOL COUNCIL POTLUCK

DATE: JUNE 16

Final potluck of the year with Talent Show and drumming presentation.

More Thank You's!

This term our volunteers have been busy – and we want to say thank you! We couldn't do it without you.

Thank you to **Cathy Gryfe-Seeley** for all that she did to organize the *2nd Annual Laughter for the Arts Comedy Night*. It takes a lot of 'behind the scenes' efforts to make an event like this happen. We were remiss not to mention them before, but they are definitely appreciated!

One of the School Council's biggest annual events is the *Spring Fun Fair*. This year **Carole Reynolds** took the helm and guided her teams of volunteers to a tremendously successful event. Measured not only in terms of funds raised, but also in terms of fun had, I think all would agree this was one of our most successful events! Thank you Carole.

Pizza Lunches continued this term.

Many thanks to, **Marianne Backman** for organizing these events. They are very popular with the kids and a steady fundraiser for the Council!

There Is Still More to Come:

We are looking forward to our *Family Fundraising Concert* on June 3rd which will feature the drumming magic of Creole Drummatix. This promises to be a fantastic evening – especially for



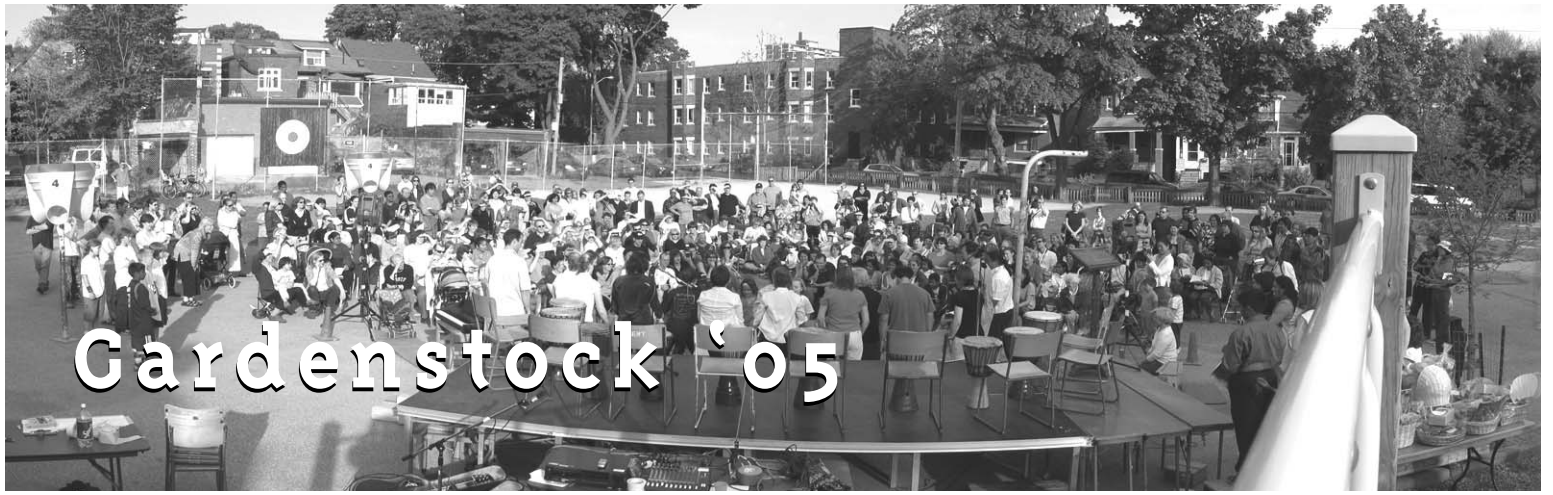
parents and kids who plan on getting involved in our new school Drumming Program! Thank you to **Marci Becker** for leading the organization of this event.

On June 16th we will have our *End-of-the-Year Potluck* and once again **Katherine & John Doyle** will be co-ordinating. The Pot Lucks are a wonderful opportunity for us to meet as a community and we appreciate the time and effort John and Katherine put into making them happen, and making them special!

Garden Ave. P.S. is a special place because so many share their time and energy to create memorable events and activities. Thanks to everyone who organized, helped out and attended events this past year.

Have a safe and happy summer.
See you in September!

Jenn Sutherland
Volunteer and
Fundraising Coordinator



Gardenstock '05

On May 26, the Annual Spring Concert was held in the school yard. On this beautiful spring evening, we were introduced to the future, adult instructors of the Djembe Drumming Club and enjoyed musical and theatrical performances from the students.



Spring Fair

The sun came out for Garden's Annual Fun Fair! Everyone had a great time playing games, bidding on items at the silent auction, munching on pizza and delicious treats from the Victorian Tea Room, and having their souvenir photos taken! The Fun Fair raised an incredible amount of money which will be used towards enriching the school experience for all the students at Garden in a variety of areas, including arts programming, books for the classrooms and library, science and math equipment, and activities that promote multi-culturalism.

Thank you, Carole. And thanks also to Jenn Sutherland and Elizabeth Munson, who helped put it all together. A big thank you to everyone for coming out and supporting our school!





Fun Fair 2005

By Kathleen Morrissey,
Council Treasurer

The results are in and the numbers are fabulous!

Hats off to Carole Reynolds and her incredible crew for putting on a wildly successful Fun Fair. As you can see from the chart below, this year's Fair sets a record for money raised in the previous five years:

2005 Fun Fair

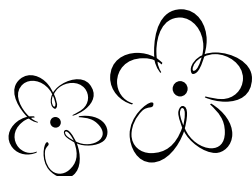
Games and	\$1,547
Raffle Baskets*	
Snack Bar	\$343
Tea Room	\$533
Silent Auction*	\$2,579
Total	\$5,002

*amounts are not final

Fun Fair Profit History

2005	\$5,002
2004	\$3,418
2003	\$4,403
2002	\$4,027
2001	\$3,824

Heartfelt congratulations to all the many volunteers who worked on the Fair!



Garden Avenue Run Club at the 2005 High Park Spring Run-Off

By Karen Green, Teacher

The weather was miserable – the worst kind of unpredictable spring precipitation. When the teacher/coaches arrived at High Park at 10 am on Saturday, April 2 we had no idea how many of our 16 runners and their parents and family supporters would show up for the race we had registered for: The High Park Power Bar 5 km. After training for 12 weeks through bitter cold, snow and ice, a little bit of slush wasn't going to keep Garden Avenue Runners away. Everyone was there, everyone raced, and all had a fabulous time, despite the weather. Mr. McClure,

Ms. Green and Mr. Goetz were the coaches of this Junior Club, whose members range from grades 4-6. We were very pleased this year to have members who ran with us for the second year, and even to see Garden Run Club (Fern P.S. students) alumni participating in the race. A huge thank you to the many parent volunteers who trained with us and to the families and friends who came out to support us on April 2. Next year, we plan to begin the training season earlier and encourage any parents interested in running to come out and join us.



Drum Club at Garden Ave.



Every Thursday evening for the past month a small group of Garden parents and teachers have been meeting to perfect their drumming skills. Under the guidance of Kwasi, a consultant with the Toronto District School Board, our group has learned authentic chants and rhythms from the African country of Ghana. Using the money raised from Laughter For The Arts, the school was able to purchase 10 djembe drums, which we use during our rehearsals, as well as other rhythm instruments. Hopefully, you saw us perform at the spring concert. Our next step is to begin working with small groups of students which will likely begin early in the fall.



Tree Dedication Ceremony

May 14, 2005



Hose Bib?

Have any of you ever wondered what a hose bib was? Perhaps a useful implement around toddler feeding time! Garden Avenue school now has one of those watery faucet things and the long rubber attachment with the spray whoozie at the end that you use to water plants and trees. Many thanks from the Gardens Grows group to the TDSB and our rainmaker Craig Tsuji. Should you be interested in assisting with the watering of the trees and gardens during the summer, please notify Jeff Hanning at 416.588.5864 or leave your name with Luba in the office.

WHAT WE DID IN WARD 7

Schools in our area (Ward 7) are represented on the Toronto District School Board by our tireless and very dedicated trustee Irene Atkinson. Representatives from each of our Ward 7 schools are invited to participate in the Ward 7 Council, where Trustee Atkinson keeps us informed about issues coming before the Board and listens to our viewpoints.

The highlight of this year's Ward 7 work was our February 22 "Meet the Minister" evening with Education Minister Gerard Kennedy, where representatives presented their concerns about our schools. Organizers are now trying to arrange a follow-up meeting with the Minister before the end of the year to discuss the public education Funding Formula.

Garden parents also participated in a series of "Effective School Councils" workshops, organized by a Board-wide parent group to share information with school council leaders about effective practices. We're looking forward to another series of workshops in the Fall for School Council Chairs and School Principals.

Our thanks go out to Irene Atkinson once again this year for her continuing leadership and support in the Ward 7 community of schools.

Back to the Catch Basin



The pooling of water outside the east exit has been a problem for years.

The problem has worsened with one result causing the east exit door frame to rot. Tree roots have totally collapsed the drains beneath the tree leaving the water nowhere to drain.

The catch basin has been re-routed around the tree so as not to damage the roots. The paving of the east area is not perfect and will be rectified.

The paving needs to be broken up, removed and constructed again.

A bonus of the first construction

however, was the addition of an extra gate and ramp for emergencies or for trucks to enter. This entrance will give big trucks access and therefore, eliminate the need to come between the school and the newly planted trees. The trees will be able to grow without having branches torn off because we need truck access.

Eventually we would like to pave the rest of the east end of the playground but we will need to raise the money to complete this project.

KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

On June 13, 15 and 16 from 3:45 pm to 4:15 Mr. Tsuji, Mrs. Polack and Kindergarten teachers, Mrs. Zaffino and Mrs. Cacich, will be welcoming the newest group of Kindergarten students to our school. The orientation will introduce our new JK's to Garden Avenue Public School by allowing them to meet their new teacher, explore their classroom and have a short story and a snack. The goal of the orientation is to make the students familiar with the school and to hopefully make their first day a little less scary.

Registered children will soon be receiving their invitation to attend. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please contact Melissa Ogilvie-McKinley at (416) 532-6799.

How Did We Do?

If you can remember all the way back to September, we asked parents then what their top priorities were for allocation of the funds we raise as a School Council.

Writing towards the end of May, we can report that, so far this year with our School Council budget, we:

- ✓ provided grants to teachers for classroom use
- ✓ provided grants for class trips
- ✓ purchased basketball units
- ✓ brought in theatre performances (all grades)
- ✓ brought in a visiting author (all grades)
- ✓ bought drums and drumming instruction to start our new program
- ✓ hosted an expanded storytelling evening
- ✓ hosted our Potluck evenings

And now we want to ask: how did we do?

If you have any thoughts, comments, suggestions about School Council allocations, please feel free to drop a note off at the office, or send an e-mail to Council Chair Catherine Marjoribanks at wordplay@sympatico.ca Thanks!