



# Wood Road Times

Wood Road's School Newspaper

June 2016

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# Time for farewell

Mrs. Hodgson says it's time for books and vacations

By Maia Bianchi

Mrs. Hodgson packs up her room and says farewell to friends. She says it's time - It's time to go play, read the books she wants to read and go on vacations.

Mrs. Hodgson began working as a teacher in 1985. Prior to Wood Road Elementary School, she worked in the Milton Terrace Primary Center. Mrs. Hodgson says working with kids is fun, challenging and rewarding.

"I knew I loved children and liked to help them learn and be proud of themselves," she said.

Fifth grade students remember Mrs. Hodgson as an encouraging teacher who appreciated hard work.

"She is really nice and she always appreciated our work," said Anna Paulsley, a fifth grader. "She always gave us appreciation on how good we were in her classroom."

Fifth grader, Pay-



Mrs. Hodgson's last field trip to the Village of Ballston Spa before her retirement this month.

ton Messina, also said she appreciated the encouragement Mrs. Hodgson gave her.

"She was funny and always positive," she said.

Mrs. Hodgson said she will miss watching children grow, sharing in their lives as they grow up, and showing them that learning new things can be fun.

Mrs. Clancy, a kindergarten teacher who works closely with Mrs. Hodgson, said she will miss her.

"Everything about

her - we teach the same, we think the same, and we are very good friends," she said.

Although, Mrs. Clancy said she is still very happy for her and hopes she has a good time with her grandkids and her new traveling life.

Mrs. Hodgson said she plans to travel a lot and be helpful at her grandchildren's school.

"My husband retired last year," she said. "I am well old enough to retire and know it's time."

# Goodbye, Welcome

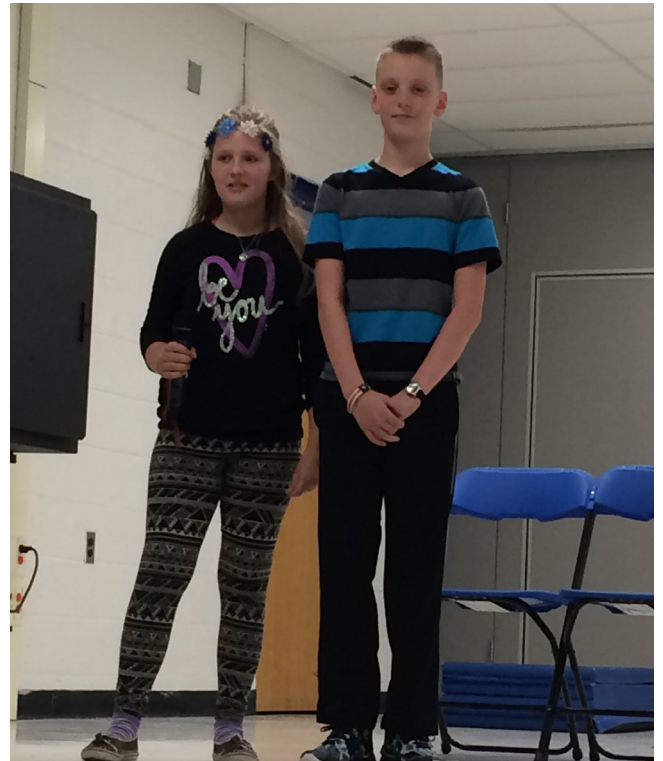
As this issue is published, we are saying goodbye to our fifth grade reporters and welcoming our new fourth grade reporters.

When our fifth grade reporters started a year ago, a lede was just a misspelled word to them and an angle had nothing to do with writing and everything to do with math. Now they are mentoring our new fourth graders and answering questions with no hesitation. They have conducted interviews like professionals and have re-written stories after every edit without complaint. I will miss working with them every Tuesday and Thursday morning, but I wish them all good things in middle school. I have no doubt they will all do very well!

We welcome our nine new members this issue. They do have very big shoes to fill, but from what I have seen so far – they will have no problem! Welcome Alisabeth Dreher, Fiona Hughes, Emma Jones, Samantha Zavadil, Emily Bagan, Maddox Minarik, Isabelle Sikoryak, Ashley Hu, and Natalia Guthrie!

- Wood Road Times Editor

## Super Spellers



Congratulations to this year's Wood Road Fifth-Grade Spelling Bee winners - Savannah Armer and Sean O'Rourke.

## Wood Road Times

**Reporters** - Mia Bedell, Abby Bednarczyk, Maia Bianchi, Sarah Lewza, Cameron McKay, Madalyn Wilson, Lauren Wodzinski

**Rookie Reporters** - Emily Bagan, Alisabeth Dreher, Natalia Guthrie, Ashley Hu, Fiona Hughes, Emma Jones, Maddox Minarik, Isabelle Sikoryak, Samantha Zavadil

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# Meeting our neighbors

## Kindergartenders visit Village of Ballston Spa

By Sarah Lewza

On June 7, kindergarten students enjoyed a day touring the Ballston Spa community.

The field trip is a culmination to the “My Community” unit.

“Kids read about the community, but now they can see what it is actually like,” said Mrs. Hodgson, kindergarten teacher.

The students visited the Mayor’s office, the fire house, the police department, the bank, post office, a beauty salon, a bakery, a flower shop, and the library.

The bus dropped the students off Wiswall Park where they began their tour. At each stop, the business owners explain to the students what they do at their place of business, and the students had a chance to ask questions.

Anna Wilson from Mrs. Walz’s class said her favorite place was the library.

“I like books, and I like to read,” said Anna.

The Mayor’s office is always a hit with the students. Each student has a chance to bang the gavel. At the bank, the students are amazed by the giant safe.

The field trip started a number of years ago as an end of the year field trip, but also as a way to end the community social studies unit. Students learn about the people who work in their community, such as doctors, firefighters and policemen.





# Moving Up

Ready or not - it's time to move up!

It's that time of year. On June 20, Wood Road fifth graders stood on the cafeteria stage one last time. Happiness, nerves and a bittersweet sadness could be felt throughout the room as each student stood and received their certificate.

The fifth grade Moving Up Ceremony is a time to bring together parents, teachers and students to celebrate the next step in their academic career.

"It's important to have a ceremony to acknowledge their hard work from kindergarten to fifth grade," said Ms. Miltenberg, a fifth grade teacher.

Student council members helped to lead the ceremony. Awards and recognitions were given for scholars, attendance, spelling bee winners and other accomplishments, such as the President's Award for Educational Excellence and Physical Education Student Leadership Awards.

Ms. Talmade presented the fifth graders with certificates and the students signed off with singing "Best Day of my Life."

- Fiona Hughes





# 5th Grade Thoughts

## heading to the middle school...

"I am really going to miss the teachers and fun stuff at Wood Road."	lings and all the kids."	school."	transition."
"I am nervous about forgetting where my classes are and what my locker code is."	"I am excited about making new friends."	"I am excited because I want to sign up for the robot club."	"I am excited about making friends from other schools, but not about switching in not a lot of time."
"I will miss the teachers because they are nice."	"You get to pick your own classes."	"I am excited to finally move out and be a grown up. We will no longer be seen as younger kids."	"I am excited about switching classes and having more responsibilities and freedom but not about having more homework."
"I am nervous about being on time to classes."	"I will miss the fun stuff at Wood Road."	"I am not excited because we will have a work load of homework. We will also have a lot more responsibility."	"I'm nervous about older kids bullying the younger kids."
"I am excited to not have to walk in lines places."	"I am nervous about the limited time you have to get to classes."	"It is not so hard in the first few weeks, but after that it starts to get harder and harder."	"I'm nervous about bullies from the other schools."
"I'm excited for making new friends from different schools."	"I am happy about getting out earlier and getting to talk in the hallway."	"It's a big place and a little hard to adjust to, but I am not scared of it."	"I am nervous about bullying because it feels like the most common place."
"I am going to miss the teachers because, I spent a lot of time with some of them and it's like saying goodbye for now."	"I will remember all the people."	"I am excited because I will be in the same class as my friends and friends from other schools."	"I am excited about not having to walk in the halls with a zero voice."
"I'm excited because I hear good things."	"I am nervous about being late to class."	"I am excited about moving up a level."	"I can't wait to meet new people."
"I'm going to miss the teachers, my younger sib-	"I am excited about moving up a level."	"I am excited about having advanced math but not about having a two-minute	"I am excited about taking Spanish."

# Zooing it up

## Fifth grade visits the Bronx Zoo

By Lauren Wodzinski

Fifth grade students will board buses bright and early on June 16, in route to the Bronx Zoo. Excited to see the animals and to spend one last hurrah with fifth grade classmates before graduating to middle school, students have been long awaiting this fifth grade milestone.

"I have wanted to go to the Bronx Zoo ever since I heard about the trip in first grade," said Maia Bianchi, fifth grader.

Fifth-grade teacher, Mrs. Tetu, said they have been going to the Bronx Zoo for years.

"We go to the zoo because kids and parents enjoy it and always have a lot of fun," said Mrs. Tetu.

The trip also ties in nicely with the fifth grade science unit.

"In science students are studying ecosystems, and the zoo has great examples that are real," said Mrs. Tetu.

Most of the fifth graders have a certain animal they really want to see.

"I am excited for everything," said Joey Lombardo, fifth grader, but is looking forward to seeing the chimpanzees.

Payton Messina and Ava Jablonski, fifth graders, are eager to see the elephants.

Mrs. Tetu said one of her



**On June 16, fifth-graders spent the day at the Bronx Zoo. The zoo trip has become an annual tradition before moving up to the middle school.**

favorites is seeing the baby gorillas.

Most of the students have never been to the Bronx Zoo, so the trip is a great opportunity for them to get there.

"I am really excited to find out what is there," said Ava.

The students will ride charter busses, which is always exciting for the kids, said Mrs. Tetu.

"They have bathrooms and DVD players," she said.

About 60 parent chaperones will tag along for the day.



# Leaving Wood Road

## Fifth grader, Mia Bedell's thoughts about moving on to middle school

I remember the day when I first walked into Wood Road Elementary School excited to be a big kid. I walked into the library for kindergarten orientation thinking the library was going to be my classroom. Here I am now a fifth grader and ready to move up to the middle school.

I am excited and I am ready for a change. I can't wait to take new classes, like new languages. I want to take Spanish. Also, I think every fifth grader can agree – I can't wait to be able to talk in the hallways. It will be different though going from the oldest kids in the school to the youngest.

I admit I am also a bit nervous because I have never been there before and it's run differently, but I think I will be fine.

I am happy we get the opportunity to take a tour of the middle school in fifth grade. It allows me and the other fifth graders a chance to see the new school since we don't know where anything is. It also makes me and maybe others feel more confident about moving up.

I think it will also be nice to meet different people at Friendship Day when fifth grade students from all of the Ballston Spa elementary schools come together and do different team



Mia pictured third from the left with friends at Moving Up Day.

building activities. I may see a familiar face or two when I am at the middle school next year.

I am also excited about the end of the year kickball tournament. Ever since I was in kindergarten I have always wanted to play against the teachers.

I have had a lot of great teachers in my time at Wood Road, and I will miss them all. I will take what they have taught me and carry it with me for the rest of my life.

I will always remember the special events that I have had at Wood Road, such as the Mother's Day tea where I sang songs to my mother and played bells for her and the Father's Day event where I sang songs for my dad – and my awful drawings of them.

I will miss Fun Day at the end of the year where I can squirt my friends with water and have popsicles, Scottie Days where I get to hang out with my friends, and all of the concerts where I have been able to play my clari-

net.

I will always remember my time at Wood Road and will miss it dearly.

- Mia Bedell

**Congratulations to all Wood Road 5th graders! Good luck in middle school! Make us proud!**



## Kindergarten Buddy program benefits both sides

By Abby Bednarczyk

Throughout all six years at Wood Road, kids look forward to special things ahead of them. One of these things is meeting their kindergarten buddy.

Each year, every kindergarten student is paired up with a fifth grade student.

"The kindergarteners and fifth graders make a friendship and relationship and the kindergarteners have someone to look up to," said Mrs. Smiley, a kindergarten teacher. She adds that both the fifth graders and the kindergarteners enjoy spending time with each other.

The students meet five to six times a year for activities such as crafts, scavenger hunts, reading, movies and even math.

"I like to talk with him and do fun projects," said Micah Cramer, a kindergartener. "I remember one time we found numbers around the school to make the number 100 on a sheet of paper."

Kindergarten Buddies has been an active program at Wood Road for as long as Mrs. Smiley can remember. The program not only benefits the kindergarteners, but also the fifth graders.

"It provides an opportunity to the fifth graders to mentor and model for the kindergarteners," she said.

Alex Rockenstire, a fifth grader, said he enjoys spending time with his buddy.

"He's a nice guy," he said.

# Little Buddies



**Fifth graders and kindergarteners frequently spend time together throughout the school year for activities and projects.**



# Owl Wise

## Owl Lady returns with her furry friends

By Mia Bedell

In May, students finally saw the owls they had been studying in real life.

The Owl Lady helped finish the unit with a bang when she brought in a number of owls to show the students.

Second grader, Alex Rejiester, said that he liked seeing all of the owls.

"I did the Tawney Owl," said Rejiester. "I was so surprised by how big the wing span was."

Each student researched an owl of their choice learning about the owl's habitat, diet and lifecycle. It wasn't until they saw them in real life that they realized just how large they were.

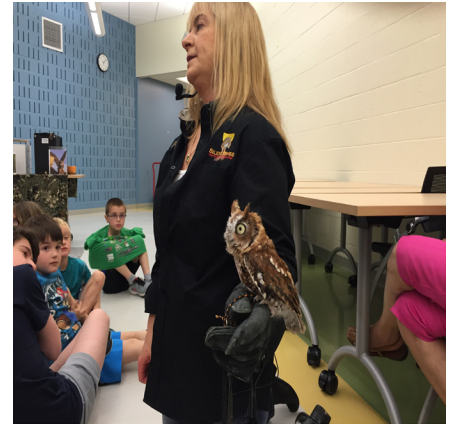
"Every year we research animals," said Mrs. Williams, the Wood Road School Library Media Specialist.

Williams' said being able to end the unit with the Owl Lady makes the unit more memorable.

"I think when you have something memorable, the students will never forget it," she said. "It's a great learning experience."

The Owl Lady, also known as Trish Marki, is a wildlife rehabilitator and educator with The Wildlife Institute of Eastern New York. Marki has been doing live owl programs for eight years, and has worked with animals all of her life. She said she began doing the educational programs when a Great Horn Owl's foot would not open. In order to keep her, she said she had to start the programs.

"I like to teach people about these owls because it helps them to



**Owl Lady shows second grade students her raptor friends.**

not be afraid," she said. "When we are afraid, we usually kill, so if they are not afraid it will preserve the owls."

Her favorite owl to show the kids is an eagle owl named Wyatt because she can let him fly. She also has other animals that she does not show to the kids like a bald eagle, baby deer, baby owls, bunnies and a squirrel. Her owls have come from places all over North America such as Canada, North Carolina, Nebraska, Michigan and New York's Adirondacks.

# Why should you join OM?

In March, the Wood Road Odyssey of the Mind (OM) team members went to Glens Falls High School to show the judges what they could do.

OM is a creative problem-solving competition for students of all ages. Teams of students select a problem, create a solution, and then present their solution at a competition.

Thousands of teams in the United States participate. OM encourages students from kindergarten, all the way to college to problem solve with a team. Younger students are given a problem. Older students vote on a problem to solve. Problems range from construct-

ing a vehicle to creating their own take on a classic story. Teams are required to present the problem in the form of a skit. Wood Road's problem was to create a vehicle with no cycles. Each team must have a coach to supervise and remind the team of the rules.

In OM, students can learn creative problem solving while having fun.

"Kids can be free," said Mrs. Ernst, coach of Wood Road's primary team. "Odyssey of the mind rewards thinking out of the box."

Team member, Tyler Leahey, a fifth grader at Wood Road, said he enjoyed it because it was a chance to cre-

ate things and use your imagination. He also liked working with people he didn't know. Tyler's favorite part about OM was being able to create anything and everything within the directions.

"You get to expand your imagination," he said.

Tyler said he will most likely do OM again, because it was fun and he liked working with other people and creating.

Interest forms will be distributed in the fall for next year's team. -Cameron McKay (Cameron participated on Wood Road's Odyssey of the Mind team this year.)

# Tea Time

## Kindergarten held annual tea for Mother's Day

By Ashley Hu

Kindergarteners and their moms attended the annual Wood Road Mother's Day Tea in May. The annual tradition brings kindergarteners and their special lady together for muffins, lemonade, tea and some sweet tears.

All dressed to impress, the kindergarteners walked in to a room of mothers, grandmothers and other special ladies. Smiles on their faces, they found their spots on the bleachers. The tables full of proud ladies watched as the kindergarteners sang their special songs. A crowd favorite, "I Think You're Wonderful" brought tears to many eyes. With more than 100 kids performing, each student stood proud.

"Mr. Bailey practiced the songs during music classes and taught the kindergarteners how to walk up and down the risers and not just jump down," said Mrs. Walz, kindergarten teacher. "He also taught them how to walk fancily and not jump off the stage, but walk up and down the steps."

Students spent some time with their special ladies and gave them a gift.

"If moms couldn't come, the grandmas came. If neither of them could come, we made sure they had a special lady from



Wood Road to be with them," said Mrs. Walz.

After the tea, the students brought their guests back to their classrooms where they did different presentations.

"I was able to show them the movie we made," said Mrs. Walz. "There was laughter and tears."

**Kindergarteners bring smiles and tears to mom's eyes as they sing the songs they have been practicing for the Mother's Day event.**



# Morley Awards

## Fifth graders presented with annual athletic awards

By Madalyn Wilson

Six Wood Road students were recognized at the Sandra G Morley Physical Education awards ceremony in May at Hudson Valley Community College.

Maia Bianchi, Aiden Fletcher, Joseph Fodera, Sarah Lewza, Michael Miller and Lauren Wodzinski were presented with the award. The award recognizes students for their character, sportsmanship, citizenship and leadership both inside and outside of the classroom.

Students are nominated by their physical education teacher.

"I was surprised that I got picked," said Michael Miller.

Coach Dayton, Wood Road's Physical Education teacher, said Miller was chosen because he stands up and shows assertiveness.

The Morley Award was started by Sandra Morley, a physical education teacher in Guilderland.

"She was actually my teacher," said Coach Dayton, "She thought that it would be good to have an award in PE."

Coach Dayton said he takes part in the award because he agrees that there should be an award in gym class.

"I also think it is important to be recognized in the community," he said.



**Six students from Wood Road received awards for character, sportsmanship, citizenship and leadership.**



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# Pennies for puppies

## Penny Harvest presents pennies to animal organization

By Alisabeth Dreher

Penny Harvest members presented a \$900 check to 11th Hour Canine Rescue at this year's Penny Harvest Ceremony in May.

The 11th Hour Canine Rescue is an organization that rescues dogs that shelters can no longer care for. The organization gives the dogs a place to live and medical attention until they get a home.

The funds were raised through Wood Road's Penny Harvest. Once the money was raised, Penny Harvest members brainstormed a number of organizations for which to donate the money. Members created a video explaining each of the organizations. Students watched the video and voted on which organization to donate the funds. The 11th Hour Canine Rescue stole the hearts of the students.

"It's truly humbling and the impact is just so big for us," said Barbara Kucharczyk, founder of 11th Hour Canine Rescue. "This will feed all of our dogs for two months. This is huge. It is really huge!"

Five Penny Harvest members presented to the check to Kucharczyk at the ceremony.

The idea for 11th Hour



**Penny Harvest members meet members of 11th Hour Canine Rescue to present check.**

### What is Penny Harvest?

Each school year, Penny Harvest members begin a school-wide campaign to help the community by gathering pennies. Members are responsible for organizing the drive and researching non-profit organizations to which they are interested donating to. Members of the student roundtable interview representatives from local organizations and discuss how their funds could be used to further support the non-profit.

The program is implemented in the fall of each school year and awards are presented to the local charities in May.

Penny Harvest encourages students to become engaged philanthropists.

Canine Rescue was that of Fiona Hughes, a fourth grade Penny Harvest member, who said she adopted her dog "Lola" from the organization.

Penny Harvest has been a fixture at Wood Road for more than eight years. The goal is to

collect funds to be donated to a community non-profit organization.

"11th Hour Rescue is a worthwhile organization," said Mrs. Henault, Penny Harvest advisor.



# Fun and games

## Annual Fun Day a hit with students

By Natalia Guthrie

As part of the end of year festivities, students took a break on Friday, June 3, for some summer fun.

"It's a day to have fun and celebrate the end of the year," said Mrs. Tallman, Wood Road Speech Teacher and one of the organizers of the event.

Fun Day is a Wood Road tradition that goes back 11 years. Originally Fun Day was called Field Day.

"It was a competition where

ribbons were handed out for winning activities," said Coach Dayton.

Over the years, teachers switched things up a bit and created what is now called Fun Day.

"We didn't want kids to feel bad if they lost," he said. "If you had fun, you won!"

This year's festivities included six different stations. Three relay races had kids working together with balls and wet sponges. At another station, kids lined up along a four-way tug-of-war. New this year, was a Kona Ice truck provided by student council. Coach Dayton managed the music for the day. Zackary Dambaugh, a first grader, said he enjoyed the racing the most.

Fourth grader, Libby Barnes, liked the water games.

"My favorite activity was the tug-of-war," said Alaina Bottisti, fourth grader.

All classes rotated through the stations for an hour during their humanities block. Organizers of the event said that each year they make changes for the better. This year's schedule was more organized than previous years.

"It was very different from last year," said Tallman. "They are staying with their classes and it is a little more structured."

Tallman added that she hopes it's a day that the kids will always remember.



**The Kona Ice truck was a favorite at Fun Day thanks to Student Council.**





# Bringing history to life

## Second graders present Living History Museum

By Maddox Minarik

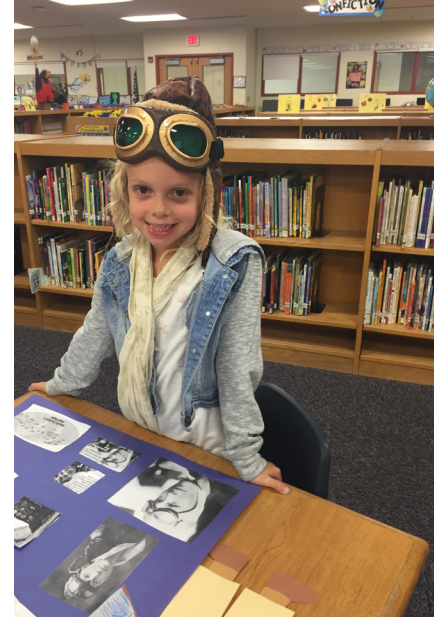
Students who have a liking for historical people were in luck if they stopped by Mrs. Cousineau's second grade living museum exhibit.

The annual exhibit was held in the Wood Road Library in June and featured famous people from the past such as Thomas Jefferson, Sally Ride and Walt Disney.

Students each had their own interactive station where they dressed up as the famous person they researched. At each station was a button to press to learn more about that person's role in history. The student would then speak about the research they had done. The students brought in their own costumes and props for their presentation.

Mrs. Cousineau, a second grade teacher, said the exhibit is a great way to show off the student's hard work.

"It's important to learn about the people of the past or present," said Mrs. Cousineau. "And this is a great way to combine research, writing social and public speaking."



**Mrs. Cousineau's second graders presented a Living Museum. Students dressed and acted as historical people for other Wood Road students and parents.**



# What grown-ups do

## Students learn about careers in the community

By Isabelle Sikoryak

In May, second graders spent some time learning about jobs in their community at Career Day.

The students moved through stations with career passports. At each station was a member of the community presenting a different career.

"There was a Naval officer, farmer, horse trainer, x-ray technician, teacher, manager, seafood clerk and others," said Mrs. O'Conner, a second grade teacher.

Second grader, Karsyn Messina, said she enjoyed the "really cool trucks" the manager brought.

"I liked seeing the doctor because she probably helped me when I was little because I had asthma," said second grader, Emma Taylor.

The presenters were volunteers from the community who offered to come in and talk about how their job fits into the community.

"Our social studies unit focuses on communities in second grade, so we wanted to show students different careers in the community to show how the community runs," O'Conner said.



**Students get a close look at what local community workers do on a daily basis at Career Day.**

# Get to know: Mrs. Damico

Reporter, Samantha Zavakil, sat down with third grade teacher, Mrs. Damico, and asked her some questions.

**How does it feel to be the person of the month?**

"I feel honored and excited."

**Who inspired you to become a teacher?**

"My second grade teacher. She did a lot of projects and made learning fun. She helped me with my self-esteem and made me feel smart."

**When did you start teaching?**

"I started teaching in 1997. I've been teaching for 18 years."

**What is your favorite thing to teach in third grade?**

"Writing. I feel it makes me know the students better. It's nice to see the kids find their voice and its exciting to hear their creativity."

**What is your biggest challenge here at Wood Road?**

"Trying to make learning fun for kids, make enough variety and make it rigorous."

**Why have you stayed at third grade instead of switching grades?**

"I really like the age. They start to become independent, and I like to be a part of that discovery."

**What do you like about teaching at Wood Road?**

"We have a talented staff. We support each other. They put a lot of time into their craft. We all want what's best for the kids."



**Mrs. Damico and her husband, Gary, at the Scottie Stampede 5K, where they placed first in their age groups.**

## In the spotlight

### Fourth grade band and orchestra perform solo

By Emily Bagan

This spring, fourth grade band and orchestra members had the spotlight all to themselves when a districtwide fourth grade concert was held in the Wood Road cafeteria.

More than 100 students from Wood Road, Milton Terrace, Gordon Creek and Malta Avenue participated in the concert for family and friends. The idea behind the concert was to welcome new members to the music and instrument world, according to Ms. Soulia, band teacher.

"It was a chance for fourth graders to meet other beginning instrumentalists throughout the district," she said.

The students were excited to perform with the other elementary schools.

"Everyone did amazing and it was really fun," said Caroline Sturm, a fourth grader.

Participation was optional, but Soulia said the turnout was more than she expected. She was impressed with how well the new musicians came together.

"There were no squeaks and the students worked very well together," she said.

### Fourth grade music

At the end of third grade, students have the chance to decide if they want to join band or orchestra. The elementary music department holds a "Petting Zoo". The "Petting Zoo" gives students a chance to touch the instruments and get an up-close look at each instrument.

If a student decides to play an instrument, he or she can choose three instruments they are interested in playing in fourth grade. Fourth grade students are expected to practice their instrument on a regular basis and attend lessons during the school day.

-Emma Jones