



THE



# LEAFLETTE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF LCW,  
LARCHMONT CHARTER SCHOOL - WEST HOLLYWOOD

1265 N. Fairfax Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
tel.323.656.6418  
larchmontcharterweho.org

## CALENDAR

**December 20-30**  
Winter Break  
No School

**January 3**  
School Resumes

**January 17**  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
No School

**January 20**  
Family Council Meeting

**January 28**  
Professional Development  
Shortened Day

**February 17**  
Family Council Meeting

**February 21-22**  
Feb.21: Presidents' Day  
Feb.22: Staff Development Day  
No School

**February 26**  
Lottery for new students  
for 2011-12 school year

## IN THIS ISSUE...

### Editors

Beth Wishnie Michaelis  
Dragana Popovic  
Erika Quinn

### Designer

Dragana Popovic

### Copy Editor

Amy Steinberg

### Writers

Johnny Camacho  
Dr. Kristin L. Droege  
Kenton Fees  
Peter Giambalvo  
Raf Green  
Brian Kaplan  
Hilary MacGregor  
Beth Wishnie Michaelis  
Jeremy Rogers  
Amy Steinberg

### Photographers

Kenton Fees  
Raf Green  
D.J. Kami  
Krista Kitaen-Penn  
Danette Mitchell Scheller  
Radan Popovic  
Yosi Pozeilov  
Marcelo Ziperovich

## ALL TOGETHER AGAIN AT ST. AMBROSE

by Kenton Fees

Now in its third year, LCW has finally found a home for kindergarten through third grade, where all of its students can learn together, under one roof. Transitioning from sharing space at two different locations, the LCW community came together to make the St. Ambrose site cheerful, charming, and beautiful.



Over the summer, faculty and families worked hard, rebuilding and updating the classrooms and outdoor



space of the campus. New students and returning ones helped their parents scrub, stencil, paint, build shelves, and garden. Between the refurbished classrooms, auditorium renovation, and painting of the main building with the vibrant green of the school logo, the LCW family saw the St. Ambrose campus bloom before its eyes. And to top it off, the whimsical mural designed by first grade dad Joey Sacavitch wraps up the main building of the school like a special holiday gift.



The new and improved campus is quite a contrast to the stark beginnings of LCW. Parent Marya Francis recalls sitting on the floor of the unfurnished office (now Cindy's bustling workspace) along with principal Kristin Droege, reading specialist Kelly Ferguson, and parent Danette Mitchell Scheller, drawing numbered chips and laying them on the floor for LCW's first lottery.

The warm, nurturing environment created by the commitment and spirit of LCW's volunteers and faculty will inspire the students to grow, just like its thriving garden.

## PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

by Dr. Kristin L. Droege



A trademark of LCW's curricular approach is our dedication to integrated academics. Most adults look back at elementary school and remember experiences subject by subject. I remember working on spelling in my spelling book in second grade while other children rotated through reading circles on the other side of the room. Science took place in the science room, except for one day each year when we planted bulbs outside. There was no notion in my mind that I might need to learn to spell science vocabulary in order to write up an observation or read directions for an experiment. There was no opportunity to write poetry about the bulbs that we planted and waited to find in the spring when they finally bloomed. But at LCW, we know through our constructivist viewpoint that children learn best when they make personal connections between the things they are learning and the things they already know. These connections build meaning and understanding for the individual.

For two years now, the LCW faculty has focused on building an integrated curriculum. We began with a comprehensive knowledge of the California State Standards, which represent the basics of "what children should know," and then set about determining the best learning experiences in which to teach these standards, and much more.

The foundation for our integrated curriculum comes from the theories and concepts of ecology and focus on the systems and cycles that define our natural world and our communities. From the kindergarten, learning that

*continued on pg.5*





**Lillie Pardo**

Lead Teacher, Kindergarten



**Cassandra Geiser**

Lead Teacher, Second Grade

# MEET THE TEACHERS AND STAFF

by  
Peter Giambalvo



**Whitney Homchick**

Lead Teacher, Second Grade



**Rich Kane**

Lead Teacher, Third Grade

Tennis and yoga	No	Do you play a sport?	Run, hike, and do yoga	Softball
Tennis	Ballet and swimming	When you were younger what sport did you play?	Soccer and volleyball	Football, basketball, and baseball
No	Guitar	Did you play an instrument?	Piano, violin, and oboe	Bongo drum
Apple with crunchy peanut butter	Salami, cheese, and crackers	Your favorite snack?	Apples and cheese	Carrot sticks
A goldfish	Two cats, Biscuit and Sophie, and a fish named Iggy	Do you have any pets?	A kitten named Millie	A red-eared slider turtle named Mr. Greenbuddy
Horses	Llamas and elephants	Your favorite animal?	Dog	Penguin
“What a Wonderful World” by Louis Armstrong	Starman by David Bowie	Your favorite song?	Blackbird by the Beatles	Meet the Mets [the New York Mets fight song]
Bake	Curl up on the couch, watch a movie, and drink hot chocolate	What do you like to do when it’s raining?	Stay inside	Sleep or read
Charlotte’s Web by E.B. White	The Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster and Jules Feiffer	What’s the best book you read in school?	Anything by Judy Blume	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl
A veterinarian	A doctor, a scientist, an astronaut, an animal trainer, and a teacher	When you were in kindergarten, what did you want to be when you grew up?	A veterinarian	Han Solo

Born and raised in Kansas City, Lillie earned a B.A. in Spanish and a B.S. in journalism from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, and received her teaching credential with an emphasis in human development at Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, California. Lillie was a founding teacher at Los Feliz Charter School for the Arts, where she taught kindergarten for four years. She likes teaching in a school that values project-based learning, as that enables children to make deep and meaningful connections to what they are studying. She has two daughters, ages 12 and 15. In her spare time, she enjoys yoga, tennis, reading, baking, and making an occasional quilt.

A true Californian, Cassandra was born in Long Beach and raised in Humboldt County in Northern California. She earned her B.A. and teaching credential from Humboldt State University. Over the last few years, Cassandra has completed her student teaching, and worked as a tutor through the Equal Opportunity Access program and as a respite worker to families of children with developmental disabilities. This is her second year at LCW—and her first time teaching second grade. Her hobbies include theater, art, and music.

## AND IF YOU’D LIKE TO KNOW MORE...

Whitney has Los Angeles in her blood—she was born and raised here. She earned a B.A. in psychology, an M.A. in education, and a teaching credential, all at the University of San Francisco. In addition to student teaching, Whitney has worked as a soccer coach, a camp counselor, and an after-school teacher. Last year, as an intern at LCW, she fell in love with the school. The LCW principles resonate with Whitney, as her family raised her in an environment that values project-based learning and lifelong education. Her interests and skills include proficiency in Spanish, photography, soccer, and cooking. And one more thing—she knows a lot about the hidden treasures of Los Angeles for kids.

Rich was born in Brooklyn, New York, and moved to Santa Monica in the mid-1990s. He went to C.W. Post University in New York, where he received a B.A. in English, and then attended Chapman University in Orange, California, where he earned his multiple-subject teaching credential. He has worked in the LAUSD system for 13 years and has had numerous roles in educating children—he has taught third, fourth, and fifth grade and has served as a grade-level chair, a science coordinator, and a technology coordinator. He loves the idea of teaching a well-rounded curriculum that includes science, social studies, and the arts, and that is what attracted him to LCW.

# LARCHMONT SCHOOLS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

by Hilary MacGregor

Most of us don't know who they are, or where or when they meet, but a group of nine people watches over our finances and guides the Larchmont Schools in our mission as laid out in our charters.

Who are they?

They are the Larchmont Schools Board of Directors, and this group of parents and professionals spends hundreds of hours annually working to make our school great, and bears ultimate responsibility for the success of the Larchmont Schools.

"The Larchmont board started with an amazing group of founding members that set the mission and vision for Larchmont Charter School (LCS)," said Danny Corwin, the director of the board, and vice president of development for the California Charter Schools Association. The board is now made up of a group of parents and community members who have a "passionate belief in our mission."

A special matrix is used to ensure that the ruling body's composition has a balance of skills and expertise. Three of the most important areas of knowledge for a board member are educational leadership, fundraising, and facilities. The board also looks for members with expertise in finance, law, marketing, and strategic planning.

The board is at the apex of our school governance structure. It lays out our strategic goals as a school community, and has authority over Brian Johnson, our executive director. Our principal, Kristin Droege, and Dolores Patton and Rick Esquivel, the heads of school at LCS and the new Larchmont Middle School, respectively, report to Johnson.

Our board currently has nine members—five parents of enrolled students and four community members. Potential board members are identified by a four-person committee known as the board nominating working group, and are then presented to the full board for approval. A majority of members must approve any new member. A board term is two years. There are no term limits.

The current board is made up of the following members:

- **Danny Corwin** (*Chair*), Vice President of Development, California Charter Schools Association
- **Marya Francis** (*Secretary*), Business Owner, Retrospecs
- **Gabi Loeb** (*Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee*), Vice President of Finance, MySpace
- **Heather Boylston**, Public Relations & Communications Consultant
- **Carl Cade**, Development Manager, Westfield LLC
- **Kriste Dragon**, Executive Director, Wonder of Reading
- **Gene Straub**, Chief Operating Officer, Youth Policy Institute
- **Richard Wright**, Film Production Executive, Lakeshore Entertainment
- **Amber Young**, Founding Principal, KIPP Raíces Academy, KIPP LA Schools

In addition to overseeing the schools' financial well-being, the most important role of the board is to plot out a long-term vision for our schools. This includes expansion plans, the strategic direction of the Larchmont Schools, and a board-approved document with measurable targets to ensure that our community continues to focus on the main components of our mission: educational excellence, diversity, and community.

The board meets on the first Tuesday of every month. The meetings are open to the public and all members of the LCW community, so drop by and check them out. For more information, including dates, times, and locations of upcoming meetings, go to <http://bod.larchmontcharter.org>.

## CREATIVE FUNDRAISING

by Beth Wishnie Michaelis

On October 11, Melissa Karz and Mindy Silverstein, co-chairs of the LCW Fundraising Committee, challenged the families who attended the Fundraising Event Planning meeting to come up with original ideas to help raise money for LCW. Not only did the attendees come up with ideas, but the follow-through was extraordinary.

By the end of November, several industrious and enthusiastic parents had already planned and executed three successful fundraisers.

Founding parent Marcelo Ziperovich came up with an idea that raised about \$2,500 for the school and also helped families get prepared for any potential emergency.

On November 6, Ziperovich and his committee assembled emergency preparedness kits, which they sold to our community and distributed to families after a tour of the Los Angeles Fire Museum. Students and parents alike spent hours looking at antique fire engines and equipment, and eventually got to climb into a current fire engine that had just come back from a fire.



Maria Alvarado, mother of a second grader and the director of LCW's after-school SPA program, has encouraged our community to bring in their receipts from Fresh & Easy markets for several months—for every \$20 our families spent, LCW received \$1. Then, on November 29, LCW families were invited to F&E to collect other people's receipts and earn extra for the school. Receipts will be eligible until the end of the year.

And the very next day, Rick Zieff and Alison Stuart, parents of a second grader, organized a night out at Souplantation, where LCW received 20 percent of full-price meals and drinks bought by anyone presenting our school flyer. More than 50 hungry LCW family members took part.

As the holidays approached, the hard-working volunteers didn't stop. Eighteen parent and staff chefs whipped up savory goodies, which were sold at the Holiday Boutique and Bake Sale held December 4. To go along with the baked treats, the LCW auditorium was transformed into a one-stop shopping destination, where shoppers stocked up on holiday gifts. Students donated their time too, with a very popular lemonade stand, a fantastic face-painting station, and a fun raffle, which netted almost \$200. Overall, the event made about \$5,000.

Just before we all go away for our winter break, we'll have another chance to eat and be merry together, at Veggie Grill on Sunset Boulevard. On Wednesday, December 15, 50 percent of food and beverage purchases will be donated to our school.

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# FALL FIELD TRIP ROUND-UP

Edited by Hilary MacGregor

## KINDERGARTEN TRIP

On October 8, the kindergarteners went to Descanso Gardens in La Cañada. Students explored the gardens with teachers and parents. The trip provided background for what the kindergarteners will study later in the year: the interdependence of plants and animals. Afterward, students discussed their findings like scientists. Teachers wrote down students' observations, and students sorted what they saw into different categories, such as "living things" and "non-living things." (Classifying objects based on similarities is a kindergarten math standard.)

—By Lillie and Jennifer



## FIRST GRADE TRIP

After launching their own schoolwide recycling program, first graders visited the Santa Monica Recycling Center on October 28. As part of the science curriculum, students are learning about natural resources, pollution and its causes, and ways they can help protect the environment. Students were shocked by the huge mountains of smelly garbage. They saw endless paper, plastic, cardboard, and metal that will end up in landfills simply because people forgot to put recyclables in

recycling bins. The kids vowed not to throw their water bottles or lunch bags in the garbage ever again. Stella Stigliano Waite came prepared with a page of questions about what was recyclable. She and the other first graders learned that Styrofoam can be thrown in the blue bin. Students were told: When in doubt, recycle. The recycling center staff will separate out anything that is not reusable. To tie this in with their community work, the money the classes earn through recycling will go to a charity of their choosing.

—By Beth Wishnie-Michaelis, with Cecilia and Mersedeh

## SECOND GRADE TRIP

As the second graders wrapped up their science unit on plants and life cycles, they took a trip to Tree People in Coldwater Canyon. The students went on a nature hike and learned about conserving water, recycling, mulch, and how trees make oxygen. They also visited the tree nursery, where they planted seeds to replenish the tree supply for future visitors. There, they crowded around the tables, clamoring to get just the right amount of dirt into the slim black plastic tubes where the seeds would germinate. Then they ran and played in the sunshine.

—By Amy Steinberg, with Cassandra and Whitney



## THIRD GRADE TRIP

On October 28, the third graders traveled into the ancient past on their trip to the Getty Villa in Malibu. The students wandered through the museum filled with Greek, Roman, and Etrurian mythology and history, past perfect atriums and gardens, and through workshops and ongoing restoration projects. Students learned about Herakleides, a real Egyptian mummy, and watched a movie detailing his mummification process. They learned that Greek statues were often depicted in the nude to create a sense of dynamic heroism. Led by Ilan's mother, Marie Svobod, the students even went on a

special behind-the-scenes tour through the restoration lab, where experts reassemble and restore Greek artifacts from hundreds of broken shards.

—By Jeremy Rogers, with Rich and Emery



## PRINCIPAL'S CORNER,

continued from pg. 1

everything is interconnected, up through third grade, learning that we are all members of multiple, nested communities, we have built a thematic structure that integrates the curriculum vertically—from one grade up to the next—to ensure that a child's experience from kindergarten through eighth grade will be fluid and meaningful, providing the connections necessary to support learning.

Next, teachers are defining each grade level's Signature Project. At LCW, a Signature Project is an over-arching thematic structure that encompasses six to ten major lessons or units throughout the year. Each lesson is connected thematically to the larger concept, provides instruction on many standards from three or more academic areas, and is taught through a variety of activities and experiences in order to allow children opportunities to learn through whatever means is most natural for each individual.

This approach allows us to teach children by accessing their individual strengths and styles and exposing children to multiple ways of conceptualizing new ideas and information. For instance, second grade students studied economics through a project in which they grew lavender plants, made sachets and tea bags, and then sold their goods for a profit. They had to plan how to make their goods using limited resources; advertise their sale; market their products; and tally their income. Throughout the process, they used math and language arts skills to focus on concepts from the social studies and science standards and learn real-world skills.

## FUNDRAISING, continued from pg.3

After a brief holiday break, our fundraising efforts will resume. In March, we will be able to sponsor our kids in the **LCW Walk-a-Thon**. In April, we'll have our yearly garage sale—so start cleaning out your closets now. Also that month, we'll present another **Momprenuers panel/boutique**, which has been an inspiring forum teaching people how to start their own business, as well as offering some wares from successful business-owner moms.

At the end of May, our third annual **Music Night** will feature popular current musicians and a giant silent auction. Last year, the night of great music raised more \$20,000 for our school, and this year we are setting our goal even higher.

Ongoing throughout the year is our biggest fundraiser, the annual **pledge drive**. Our goal is to raise \$325,000 in contributions from families and friends of our students by June 30, 2011. In the past, we have had 100 percent participation from our LCW community, and we are confident that we can do the same this time around.

The fundraising ideas are continuing to bubble up. Clearly, if you present our families with a challenge, they will rise to the occasion.

## COMMUNITY GROUPS

by Raf Green

November 2 was election day. While registered voters were casting ballots for governors, senators, and a myriad of ballot measures, the LCW second and third graders participated in a historic election of their own. They voted to elect the school's first student council. They selected nine council members from a crowded field of thirty-eight candidates—nearly half of the students in the second and third grade classes—to be the voices of all LCW students.



The candidates made campaign posters and presented their platforms in front of more than 100 people. One student proclaimed himself a “nacho guy.” Another candidate ended her speech with a rousing “Hey LCW, I’ve got your back!” A refreshingly humble candidate admitted, “I can’t promise anything...” and then donned a gigantic silly hat as a vivid example of what his idea for Silly Hat Day might look like.

Their ideas included Joke Day, sneaker recycling, talent shows, Drive-In Movie Day, a school soccer tournament, and even suggestions for a school mascot. But the most enthusiastic response came when one candidate suggested Ice Cream Day!

Student council is just one of many ways that LCW children can participate in their school community. Another way is by being part of the recently formed community groups, which serve as an extended community for every student at LCW.



Each group includes a faculty member and two or three students from each grade level. The kids have given their groups colorful names such as The Spiky Lizards, The Sparkly Blue Fish, The Courageous Cheetahs, and The Dodger Dogs. The clans sit together on Fridays at All School Sing, where they hold up signs proclaiming their names. They also come together once a month for various activities, like making gifts for the toy drive and doing art projects. Principal Kristin L. Droege explained, “The community groups give everyone a chance to know kids of different ages...gain leadership experience, discover the pleasure of nurturing younger children, gain older role models, and just have fun with new friends at school.”

Students also learn about community in their own classrooms. Examples include the kindergartners' gaining insight into their teachers' roles in the school community, and the second grade “Community Heroes” program that introduces students to parents and other adults who talk about how their jobs, avocations, and hobbies serve the local community.



“The students learn that the classroom and the school are our community,” said second grade teacher Whitney Homchick. “Without any one of us, the community isn’t the same, so we all need to work together to make our community run smoothly.” By giving kids so many different opportunities to play active roles in their school community, LCW is nurturing a wide variety of future community leaders.

# DECONSTRUCTING CONSTRUCTIVISM: HOW DO WE TEACH TO SO MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF LEARNERS?

by Dr. Kristin L. Droege

The basis of constructivism is the idea that every child “constructs” his or her own understanding of new information or concepts. Each child brings to the table a brain that processes information in a unique way and a set of life experiences that define the child’s worldview. These two components create the knowledge base, expectations, assumptions, strategies, and styles that the child draws upon to make sense of what is encountered in school.

So how can a teacher share new learning with 22 different thinkers and expect to reach each one in an appropriate way? It is done in a series of stages in which the information is broken down into its component parts and considered from all perspectives. Then, a variety of lessons and activities are devised to help ensure that information is shared in many different ways. Each child is encouraged and supported to try all the different ways of understanding and to connect with the one, or ones, that really make sense for his or her mind.



For instance, when I recently visited one of our first grade classrooms, I observed the math stations. Three different activities were available to children to reinforce and support recent lessons. In the first area, the teacher had posters reminding students of the value of pennies and nickels. Students made choices to buy and sell small plastic animals with price tags using coins, then wrote their number equations on

white boards. Here, students engaged in a life-based activity that was presented at a meaningful level for their current ability. As different groups of students moved through, the teacher adjusted the price tags to create appropriate challenges for each group of children.

In the second area, children worked with a Hundreds Chart, showing rows and columns of numbers from 1 to 100. The challenge was to discover the 3s Pattern, by coloring in each square you landed on when you counted by 3 (3, 6, 9, 12, and so on). Having already seen the 2s pattern, children were surprised to see a very different design emerge on their paper. This graphic experience supported visual learners in reinforcing understanding of number sense, one-to-one correspondence, and even and odd numbers. The lesson could be completed either by careful counting or by paying attention to visual cues and patterns— or a balance of both.

In the third area, children worked on measuring with both inches and centimeters. Their paper identified three classroom items to measure: the length of a pencil, the width of your hand, and the height of your chair leg. Children wrote the number of inches each measured and the number of centimeters each measured. Then children were asked to identify three other items in the room to measure and record. Children chose erasers, water bottles, shoes, and more. Each child drew his or her objects and wrote the two measurements. This allowed children to explore familiar objects and examine them in a new and unfamiliar way, making mental comparisons between sizes of objects, understanding that units of measure can vary, and creating a set of data upon which later activities using “greater than” and “less than” could be introduced to something that had a personal meaning.



By making lessons life-based, exploratory, intrinsically interesting, and broad-ranging, teachers at LCW work to offer a challenging and meaningful education to every learner.

## THE STUDENTS SPEAK!!!

Harvested by Pete X

In the run-up to the recent LCW Student Council election, the candidates all prepared and gave wonderful campaign speeches. They were very thoughtful and very well-received by a rapt electorate. And on a lighter side, they shared their favorite jokes with me. Here’s what some of what our good-humored politicians offered up:

**Ava Mearns**, second grade

Q: Why can’t you play games in the jungle?

A: Because there’s always gonna be a cheetah!

**Caiden Reed**, third grade

Q: What do you call cheese that’s not yours?

A: Nacho cheese.

**Forrest Brown**, second grade

Q: What do you call a cow that likes to rock out?

A: A moo-rocca!

**Julian Berger**, third grade

A pony goes to see the doctor and complains that he has a sore throat. The doctor says, “I’m not surprised you have a sore throat; you are a little hoarse.”

**Kaia Glickman**, second grade

Q: Why was six afraid of seven?

A: Because seven eight nine.

**Katie Zieff**, second grade

Q: Where does a dog park his car?

A: In a barking lot!

**Omeed Almassi**, second grade

Q: Why did the policeman want to go to sleep?

A: Because he was undercover!

**Sasha Corcuera**, second grade

Q: What’s your name?

A: Silvia.

Q: What color is the sky?

A: Blue.

Q: What direction am I pointing? (her finger is pointing up)

A: Up.

Q: Silvia blue up!

**Sofie Gavin-Melamed**, third grade

Q: When are cooks mean?

A: When they beat the eggs and whip the cream.

**Stephen Kim**, second grade

Q: Knock, knock.

A: Who’s there?

Q: Yah.

A: Yah who?

Q: Yahoo is here!

**Theo Fernandez**, second grade

Q: Why did the kid cross the playground?

A: To get to the other slide.

Q: Why did the dolphin cross the bay?

A: To get to the other tide.

**Freddy Churchill**, second grade

Q: Why did the tissue want to dance?

A: Because it had a boogie!

Q: Why didn’t the skeleton dance?

A: Because he had no body to dance with.

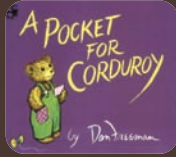
# LCW FAVORITE BOOKS CORNER

by Jeremy Rogers

*"Books, the children of the brain."  
- Jonathan Swift*

As avid readers know well, stellar books need to be shared with others. An enthusiastic recommendation from a friend to read a favorite book can carry more weight than critical reviews, bestseller charts, and literary awards combined.

Here are some of our favorites from LCW classrooms, as selected by the teachers and students. Some of the titles might be familiar and others might be new discoveries for you and your children, but all of these books come with the assertion "You must read this!"



## A POCKET FOR CORDUROY Written and illustrated by Don Freeman

\*\*\*Recommended by Lillie Pardo, Kindergarten Teacher

Corduroy is Lisa's favorite teddy bear and the perfect companion for a day at the Laundromat. When Lisa and her mother make sure all of the clothes pockets are empty before going in the wash, Corduroy looks down at his overalls and realizes that he doesn't have any pockets of his own. While trying to remedy this, Corduroy instead finds himself lost in the Laundromat. Lillie says of her students' response to this comic adventure, "Kindergarten students enjoy read-aloud books with a good sense of story—a beginning, middle, and end, and characters that they can connect to."



## THE KISSING HAND Written by Audrey Penn / Illustrated by Ruth Harper and Nancy Leak

\*\*\*Recommended by Jennifer Santangelo, Kindergarten Teacher

Chester the raccoon doesn't want to go to school until his mother lets him in on the secret that kisses can be carried. She reassures Chester that everything will be fine while he is away from home by kissing his hand. Then, if he ever gets lonely, all he has to do is touch his hand to his cheek and the kiss will transfer. Jennifer believes the children respond to this classic because of the sentiment that "Chester's mother is helping him remember that she loves him and is thinking about him, even when she isn't with him."

## WE ARE EXTREMELY VERY GOOD RECYCLERS Written and illustrated by Lauren Child

\*\*\*Recommended by Cecilia Wong, First Grade Teacher

Popular children's book characters Charlie and Lola decide to enter a recycling competition to win their own tree to plant. If they are going to win the game, they have to encourage their classmates to lend a hand gathering one hundred plastic, metal, and paper items in two weeks. Cecilia likes this book because "one of the biggest and most exciting yearlong projects in first grade is the recycling project. The children especially enjoyed this book because of its direct connection and relevance to what they are currently so passionate about—helping the Earth!"



## THE SQUIGGLE Written by Carole Lexa Schaefer / Illustrated by Pier Morgan

\*\*\*Recommended by Mersedeh Emrani, First Grade Teacher

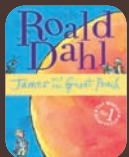
When a group of children take a walk through the park with their teacher, one curious little girl separates from the others and discovers a squiggle on the ground. She picks it up and uses her imagination to turn it into all sorts of amazing things, like a roller coaster, the Great Wall of China, and a dragon. Mersedeh and her class enjoy the creativity of this story and the distinct line drawings and vertical calligraphy that help "teach writers to use their imagination when they write."



## NOT A BOX Written and illustrated by Antoinette Portis

\*\*\*Recommended by Whitney Homchick, Second Grade Teacher

A rabbit on a box is asked a series of questions: "Why are you sitting on, standing on, wearing a box?" The rabbit insists to the reader that it is in fact not a box. The rabbit then takes the rest of the book to illustrate the many things the box could be: maybe a mountain or a building or a robot. Whitney says this is a commonly requested read-aloud book simply because "everyone's imagination runs wild considering what a simple cardboard box can be turned into."



## JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH Written by Roald Dahl

\*\*\*Recommended by Cassandra Geiser, Second Grade Teacher

Roald Dahl's famous adventure about "the saddest and loneliest boy you could find," and his fantastic escape from the misery of two horrible, wicked aunts is a rousing, whimsical journey inside the pit of a giant peach. Along the way, James befriends a grasshopper, an earthworm, a centipede, and a spider. Cassandra and her students treasure this book because it is an undeniable concept for young minds: "A little boy travels around in a giant peach and meets new friends!" What more is there to say?

## GRACE FOR PRESIDENT Written by Kelly S. Dipucchio / Illustrated by LeUyen Pham

\*\*\*Recommended by Emery McCabe, Third Grade Teacher

While learning about government in school, Grace notices that the United States has never had a female president. Deciding that she would like to be the first, Grace runs for president in a school election. She ends up campaigning hard against her opponent, who rests easy relying on his popularity instead. Emery says, "The book is a favorite of the class, and particularly timely, as the second and third graders just went through student council elections. It introduces the electoral process and promotes the values of hard work, courage, and independent thought."



## THE JESTER HAS LOST HIS JINGLE Written and illustrated by David Saltzman

\*\*\*Recommended by Rich Kane, Third Grade Teacher

What happens when a court jester can't make people laugh? He is banished from the court and goes off on a quest to discover why the world has lost its collective sense of humor. The jester meets a sick girl, and he works so hard to make her laugh and not cry, that when he succeeds, laughter returns to the world. Rich recommends this title because "it's a great book. Children and adults alike find something to smile about deep inside no matter how bad a day you might be having."



## GIVE GOOD ART

In a stroke of holiday good luck, the upscale department store Barneys New York generously donated canvases and paints for every LCW second and third grader to paint a portrait of their favorite chef. And now through January 2, 2011, the stunning results are the stars of the Wilshire



Boulevard window displays at the store's Beverly Hills location. The paintings are priced at \$150 each, with 100 percent of the proceeds going to LCW. Barneys is famous for its fabulous window displays—and this just might be the best one yet. Be sure to stop by.

## THIS SING IS YOUR SING

Are you wondering why your child seems to know all the words to "Yellow Submarine" and "Wild World?" Then come to All School Sing and find out. Every Friday morning at 8:30 in the auditorium, Mat Baker, LCW Music and Math Specialist, leads the kids in singing classics like "Puff the Magic Dragon" and new smash hits, including "The LCW Song." Stop by, check it out, and join in!

## GREEN SUNDAY!!!

Green Sunday is back. And this year, each one of these special nature breaks is being hosted by a different class. Lillie's class already trekked up **Franklin Canyon** on December 5. Don't worry, you haven't missed all the fun. You can still join the **Snow Outing** (January 17; Whitney's class), **Will Rogers Beach** (February 13; Jennifer's class), **Eaton Canyon** (March 6; Emery's class), and the **Sepulveda Nature Center** (March 20; Mersedeh's class). More class-led outdoor fun coming all spring!

## BULLETIN BOARD

Compiled by Brian Kaplan and Johnny Camacho

## VEGGIE DRIVE-THROUGH

by Hilary MacGregor

Have you seen the recycled grocery bags at Wednesday afternoon pick-up, with the fresh greens peeking out the top? LCW is currently the only school in Los Angeles participating in the Healthy Market Basket program. Based on a 35-year-old community-supported agriculture concept originally from Japan, this program through SEE-LA provides participants with local produce and supports the Los Angeles Medical Center Farmers' Market. For as little as \$22 a week, you can get a bag of fresh local produce dropped off at school for you to pick up with your child



every Wednesday. The program brings the farmers' market to your (car) door, and will get you out of your veggie rut—a page of recipes is provided each week to give you ideas for new ways to cook your delicious seasonal bounty. To sign up, go to: <http://shop.farmernet.com> and select Larchmont Charter as your worksite.



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1265 N. Fairfax Ave.  
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[larchmontcharterweho.org](http://larchmontcharterweho.org)