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Southwest Portland's Independent Neighborhood Newspaper

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safe crossing of
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Volume No. 16, Issue No. 6

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Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

April 2008

Peace march, rally commemorate 5th anniversary of U.S. invasion of Iraq

By Polina Olsen
The Southwest Portland Post

More than 4000 people gathered on Portland's South Park Blocks for the March 15 World Without War action camp, rally, and peace march. Commemorating the fifth anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, all attendees wanted to stop the war and bring U.S. troops home.

In addition, supporters represented causes for freedom and justice around the world ranging from Falun Gong persecution in China to anti-immigrant legislation here at home.

Presented by PDX Peace (www.pdx-peace.org), more than 100 local organizations and businesses co-sponsored the event; grim statistics brought the crowd despite rain. The Washington Post, sites 4,461 U.S. military deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan. Final costs could total \$3 trillion.

"I'm here because I want to see an end to the war," said Anne Bryant, who lives in the Ashcreek neighborhood of Southwest Portland. A volunteer for the Portland Peace Coalition, Bryant arrived at 8 a.m. Busy children coloring

their own signs surrounded the long tables in her tent.

"This is an opportunity for people to express what they would like to see funded if the money spent on the war were spent on other things," she said. I just talked to some small children who said they'd like to see their family move into a nicer home."

With pouring rain interrupted by brief sun breaks, people huddled under covered booths or tracked through the mud-soaked ground. Leashed dogs walked under their owner's umbrellas. Colorful signs, streamers, and costumed demonstrators brightened an otherwise gray-looking day. Police on bicycles watched from the sidelines. There were no arrests or serious incidents.

One young Nepali carrying a drum wore a jeweled headdress and shirt emblazoned PEACE. People wearing white, grotesque papier-mâché masks and black capes strode by; others dressed as clowns chat with the crowd. Blaring rap music provided background for discussions. "He's a revolutionary who lives and breathes hip-hop," the announcer said as she introduced one band.

"I'm Sophie Liu," a young woman



Demonstrators march for peace in the South Park Blocks, March 15. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

said in heavily accented English. She explained how she escaped from a Chinese concentration camp as she passed out Falun Gong brochures. "People are murdered, and they take and sell their organs," she said. According to Liu, members of this self-cultivation practice are primary targets of atrocity in China.

A Catholic Priest, Father John Mark Gilhousen, came to advocate universal healthcare, and the War Resister's League urged people to avoid paying war taxes. Rachel Hampton from West Hills Friends, located in the Maplewood neighborhood, wanted to "let people know about Quakers. We are

all pacifists," she said. "We've been going to these things since before the war started."

At 2 p.m. the crowd gathered for the rally and cheered. The seven speakers included a Gulf War veteran, and Bob Watada, father of the first commissioned officer to refuse deployment to Iraq.

Barbara Dudley, Professor in the Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University and former executive director of Greenpeace USA, said "The invasion of Iraq was not a mistake. It was deliberate, -- and it was illegal." She urged the crowd to follow the lead of

(Continued on Page 2)

Park bureau to develop new South Waterfront open spaces

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Portland Parks and Recreation is pursuing the development of two new public open spaces in the South Waterfront.

The bureau will hold one more advisory committee meeting February 8 on implementation of plans for extension of the Willamette Greenway into the South Waterfront's Central District, according to project manager Patty Freeman.

The result would be an area about

100 feet wide and about five blocks long, centered on the foot of Southwest Gibbs Street, containing a combination of natural habitat, recreation facilities, and continuation of the greenway's bicycle and pedestrian paths.

The bureau will also officially apply for design review for the project next month, Freeman said. The bureau hopes that it can commence work on the project within the "fish window," the period (July 1 to October 31) when work is permitted near "fish-bearing streams" (such as the Willamette River) that are home to endangered fish species.

At the moment the bureau has assembled a total of \$3.7 million in fund-

ing for the project, Freeman said. This would be sufficient to do most of the work, but might not cover three features: a boat dock, a shade pavilion, and an "overlook structure" (from which people could view birds and other wildlife.) The cost for these features would be \$580,000, \$120,000, and \$560,000, respectively.

Meanwhile the park bureau is planning the district's Neighborhood Park, a 2.1 acre parcel surrounded by planned high-rises and bounded by Southwest Moody and Bond avenues and Curry and Gaines streets. The city has allocated \$2.8 million for the park's development.

According to project manager Sandra Buttzos, project designers have drafted four possible development schemes for the space:

The first is called an Event design in which much of the space would be devoted to a natural amphitheater, suit-

able for concerts or other performances. The second is called a Landscape design in which about a third of the land would be a lawn or grassy area, and the rest would be landscaping.

The third is a Neighborhood design that would include a playground, benches, gardens, and other features geared to the immediate neighborhood rather than the region. A Hybrid design would combine features of the other proposals.

The four designs were displayed last month at an open house, the second put on as part of the project, last month, and the bureau received comments from about 50 people, Buttzos said. There will be a third and final open house from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. April 22 at the Oregon Health and Sciences University's Center for Health and Healing, 3303 S.W. Bond Ave. At this session the bureau will present its recommended design.



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Peace March, Rally

(Continued from Page 1)

the Vietnam Veterans Against the War 1971 testimony that exposed possible war crimes.

After the rally, costumed men on stilts and a band led demonstrators along the march route. As they walked down Southwest Park Avenue and Madison Street, General Strike, a small acoustic group, played *Down by the Riverside* on a guitar and mandolin.

Wilson High School Students for Social Justice walked by, one young woman wearing a bright poncho special for peace rallies. "We're promoting the ideas of peace and allowing youth to have a voice," said student Gabriel Erbs. "We have about 10 people here from the group but I expect there are quite a few

more Wilson students."

Four blocks of flags staked into the South Park Block's grass made up the Iraq Body Count exhibit. "There are 120,795 flags. Each represents five dead people -- white for dead Iraqis, red for dead Americans," explained Rudy Dietz from the information table at the corner of Southwest Park Avenue and Market Street. People walking by stopped and stared at the evocative memorial. Many carried anti-war signs for the rally.

"A number of people have lost interest in what's happening in Iraq," Dietz said. "I think we've lost perspective of the sacrifice that American troops and Iraqis have made -- the number of people who have died, or been injured, and forever will be affected by this war."



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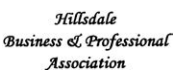
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Graphic Design: Leslie Baird Design
Printing: Oregon Lithoprint

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Deadline for news and advertising is generally the 15th of the month prior to publication. Please call for current deadline information. Advertising rates are available upon request.

The Post has a circulation of 10,000 in Multnomah Village and the surrounding neighborhood business districts including Burlingame, Capitol Hill, Garden Home, Glen Cullen, Hillsdale, South Portland, Raleigh Hills, West Portland and Vermont Hills. The Post is published on or about the 1st of every month. Subscriptions are \$24 per year. Back issues are \$2.50 each when available. All major credit cards accepted.



The Post is printed on recycled newsprint using soy-based inks.

Proposed Hillsdale Plaza disregards little league, softball programs

As a longtime supporter of Wilson High School and Southwest Portland youth athletics I am appalled at the proposal by the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association to develop property within the Wilson High School athletics complex as a "Hillsdale Plaza", amphitheatre and trails hub.

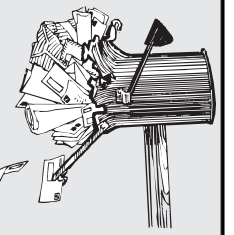
The so-called "Rieke Triangle" and the adjacent ball field have long been eyed by community activists and organizers of the Hillsdale Farmers Market for their own purposes, disregarding the existing heavy use of that property by Wilson students and other area youth.

When the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association promotes development of this Portland Public School property, its representatives never mention these existing uses. So let's be clear.

The ball field is the home field of the Wilson Women's Softball program. The field is also heavily used by Southwest Portland Little League for both its boys and girls programs. The hillside above is used as an overflow area for other athletics programs, mostly soccer and lacrosse.

The entire property is integral to the future of these student and youth athletics programs. While the Hillsdale Farmers Market can be located elsewhere, and irrespective of dysfunction within the Hillsdale commercial area,

Letters to the Editor



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there is no more suitable place for student and youth athletics programs than within the Wilson High and Rieke Elementary school complex.

When my daughter, her teammates and their classmates walk to their athletic fields, when they run and play and laugh within the open space that our predecessors put into trust for them so many years ago, I feel good about living in Portland.

When I see and hear that influential commercial interests in Hillsdale seek to displace without recognition our voiceless children, I begin to question the values of our self-proclaimed civic leaders. I hope that others will stand with me and say "Hands off!" Portland Public Schools property.

Thomas Benke
Southwest Portland

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Great Food Drive includes donated eggs, omelettes alfresco

By Mark Ellis
The Southwest Portland Post

It was mid-March, and Old Man Winter hadn't quite given up his grip on Portland. But that didn't stop the Oregon Food Bank from setting up an omelet queue in the U.S. Bank parking lot at Barbur and Terwilliger boulevards and offering a scrumptious breakfast to donors who braved the cool, rainy day.

Sponsors of the food drive included KGW NewsChannel 8, US Bank, Tillamook Cheese, and Nest Best Eggs. "We're calling it the Great Food Drive," said coordinator Jean Kempe-Ware of the March-long effort to raise food and cash donations.

She talked about the spike in food box distribution levels that occurred through the early part of this decade, a rise which has sustained its peak of around 750,000 since 2004.

More and more seniors, disabled individuals, and working poor fami-

lies are finding that higher prices and economic down-turns have challenged their ability to put food on the table.

"Thirty-seven percent of the folks who seek our help represent households with children," said Kempe-Ware, who also pointed out that over the last 22 years the percentage of seniors receiving food has gone from 3 to 7 percent.

Another aspect of the problem can be presented as a Catch-22. In the quest to aid the process of America's independence from foreign oil, farmers are converting land historically dedicated to food production to the production of the type of inedible maize-style corn used in bio-fuels.

Some experts have pronounced "the end of cheap food," and donations from the food industry which in past years have represented that largest single Oregon Food Bank donor are down. "We need to make up that shortfall with our food drives, and cash donations," Kempe-Ware explained, adding that, "A ten dollar donation suffices to create

one food box for a hungry family."

On hand for the tasty and nutritional aspect of the drive was Kathleen Sparks, Northwest sales manager for the Nest Best Egg Company. Nest Best was slated to donate 680,000 eggs through March.

Sparks corroborated the reality of how more land devoted to ethanol production and higher transportation costs due to oil prices translate to higher prices at the grocery store. The cost of feed for Nest Best hens has doubled in the last year.

According to Sparks, a diet which includes the protein and other nutrients provided by eggs has been attributed to healthier brain function, especially in seniors. "Eggs are just about the perfect food" said Kathleen, as she folded fresh-

cut onion and tomato into a deliciously light and fluffy omelet.

Nearby, a table with muffins, pastries orange juice and all the fixings for a full breakfast was set under an umbrella. For a \$20 donation folks could pile their plates, and enjoy the kind of meal that all too many low-income and disadvantaged people in Portland Metro and the surrounding counties are finding harder to put on the table.

"The Great Food Drive is an ongoing success," concluded Kempe-Ware, who said she was looking forward to continued community support for her organization's mission: "to eliminate hunger and its root causes, because no one should be hungry." For more information: www.oregonfoodbank.org.

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NEWS BRIEFS

New business group organized

South Portland Neighborhood Association president Ken Love announced that the area will soon have a new neighborhood business association. A kickoff meeting in February drew 30 participants, he said. "This may become the largest business association in southwest," he said. Ross Island Grocery owner Jennifer Daneluk, who attended the session, said, "This area is one of the last to form a business association. It's really exciting."

Southwest neighborhood coalition to hold candidates fair

Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. will hold a candidates fair beginning at 7 p.m. April 29 at the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 S.W. Capitol Highway. SWNI has invited all candidates for

mayor and two soon-to-be-vacated City Council seats. Mayor Tom Potter has declined to run for re-election, Commissioner Erik Sten is resigning, and Commissioner Sam Adams is stepping down in order to run for mayor. Come hear and question the candidates you will select with your votes

Watershed tower now includes backlit "Hillsdale" sign

The Watershed tower is now shining thanks to the community around it. Plans for the four-story, 51 unit affordable senior housing project always included backlighting for a sign at the top of its tower.

However, rising construction costs forced Community Partners for Affordable Housing, the project's parent organization, to cut this feature from the budget. At this point the Hillsdale Alliance, Business Association and Neighborhood Association "really stepped up to the plate" and raised \$21,000 for the light, according to Community Partners

spokesperson Tracy Stepp.

The agency pitched in to provide the balance of the payments for the light

and a human-and-dog drinking fountain in front of the facility, at a total cost of \$60,000.



The Hillsdale community raised some \$21,000 to help backlight the "Hillsdale" sign on the Watershed building. (Post photo by Don Snedecor)

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Trail advocates seek bridge/culvert for safe crossing of Boones Ferry Road

By Mark Ellis
The Southwest Portland Post

What happens when a popular forest trail and a tributary creek both culminate at a high-volume, high-speed arterial street? That's exactly the Hillsdale-to-Lake Oswego Trail dam-up dilemma that the Southwest Trails Group wants to bring to public attention.

The creek and the trail alongside it currently run smack into Boones Ferry Road. "This is already the best trail in Southwest Portland," said Southwest Trails Group spokesperson Don Baack, "and it could be even better."

The trail is officially known as Southwest Urban Trail 6, a designation which does little to suggest the beautiful pine and deciduous older-growth forest, pathway, and creek, which in spring and autumn often rushes with rain run-off.

According to Baack, despite the schism in the trail, people still enjoy Trail 6, and safely connecting the two habitats on either side of Boones Ferry Road would greatly improve the experience.

At present, the obstructive nature of the roadway keeps salmon from making it to spawning grounds up Arnold Creek and into Tyron Creek. Also stopped cold are traffic-wary hikers daunted by the prospect of traversing such a thoroughfare without benefit of a traffic light.

Baack's organization and its friends are raising public awareness about a years-long effort to provide the trail's missing link. They are proposing a culvert suitable for both fish and humans.

"If we do not have a safe crossing of Boones Ferry Road," said Baack, "we will never have a trail from Hillsdale through to Tyron Creek State Park and Lake Oswego."

Under the proposed plan, conditions of creek side and approaches to the crossing will be improved, and a culvert built that will allow people to follow the creek under the roadway, and help the fish—which Baack said are presently dying short of suitable spawning grounds—to reach the kind of waterways which insure a healthy propagation of the species.

The proposal, identified in a press release as the Boones Ferry Road Culvert/Bridge CIP Project, is already approved and sitting on the drawing board. Expenditures amount to \$224,000 in the first two years, with a projected \$4 million total tab.

The challenge now is to get the plan

implemented in a timely matter, with the Southwest Trails Group position being that summer of 2008 would be optimum.

Baack affirmed that the project will take several years to get organized and completed, and doesn't want it to get lost in this year's budgetary mix. He asked that citizens contact the Portland City Commissioners as soon as possible to illustrate their grassroots support for the plan.

It is a plan which the trails group hopes will ultimately supply the missing link in what could be one of Portland Metro's most enjoyable walks in the park.

"The more folks who contact the board," said Baack, "the better the likelihood that we'll get the culvert construction and trail improvement plan in motion now." For more information visit www.swtrails.org.

New Southwest Charter School

(Continued from Page 8)

found 33 children in the classroom.

"We met one of the moms from preschool. She said, 'You've got to come and look at this school.'" Cooper likes the emphasis on parental involvement. "There's always a parent in the classroom."

Since it's place-based learning, "Juliet knows more about the environment than I do. They go down to the beach area in Willamette Park and she can point out all of the plants. She's gotten a lot more into birds and gardening."

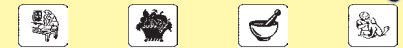
Southwest Charter School is already looking for a larger facility. "We have

over 30 kids who have applied for next year," Gurnee said. Following the pattern of Portland charter schools, each year past the first is oversubscribed.

"That's been one benefit of this year. It's been wonderful," Gurnee said, knowing that open enrollment cannot last. "When you're a parent looking for another option most of what you hear is 'No.' We've been able to say 'Yes.'"

Southwest Charter School, 5839 SW Hood Ave., is open for tours Thursday mornings at 9 a.m. by reservation. For more information call 503-244-1697 or visit www.swcharter.org.

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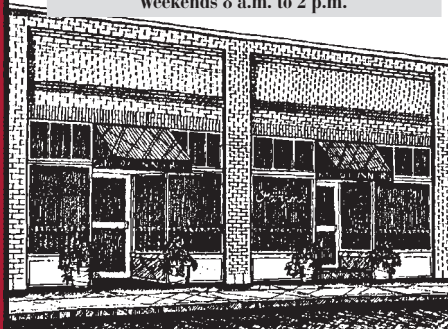
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Southwest residential development projects advance

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Two major development projects in inner southwest Portland moved forward last month.

The Broadway Drive Heights Condominiums, a 44-unit structure proposed for an undeveloped hillside between Southwest Broadway Drive and Sam Jackson Road, had its third advisory session before the Portland Design Commission last month.

The original proposal called for placing the three-story structure 70 feet above Broadway Drive, prompting the commission to declare it an unsuitable "flatland project on stilts." Architect

Bob Evansen then moved the buildings much lower and closer to the street, creating a conventional streetscape complete with sidewalks and on-street parking.

The project will have its own garage, partially underground, beneath two levels of units. To visually break up the building's long façade – another early commission peeve – the structure will be separated into three parts connected by stair towers. Another feature, one applauded by both the commission and the Homestead Neighborhood Association, will be a public trail connecting Broadway Drive, Sam Jackson and the Marquam Nature Trail.

Encouraged by highly favorable commission comments at the last of the

three informal sessions, the developer has submitted a formal application. The Design Commission will hold a formal hearing on the proposal the afternoon of April 17 at 1900 S.W. Fourth Ave.

In the South Waterfront, the commission gave an informal review to the latest proposal of the Prometheus Corporation, which owns six acres of land near the south end of the district.

Their project is a 31-story, 320-foot residential tower, and a smaller 74-foot structure, between Southwest Bond Avenue and River Parkway at Abernethy Street. Architect Isaac Johnson said that the tower would be only 110 feet wide from north to south with a floor plate of 10,000 square feet, minimizing the extent to which it would impede views

from neighborhoods to the west. The building will have "live-work" units at the ground floor, he said.

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City to review tree preservation ordinances

The city is commencing a long-anticipated, multi-bureau review of its regulations and practices relating to tree cutting, planting and preservation.

Planner Linda Jortner said that currently the rules, as used by several different bureaus, have been found to be complex, apparently contradictory, and difficult to enforce.

"We want things to be simpler and easier to use and understand," Jortner told *The Post*. "We want to be sure we don't solve one problem and create another."

As part of the effort, the city has formed a stakeholder committee that includes community representatives, builders, preservationists, and members of bureaus or their advisory bodies. One of these is Margot Barnett, a southwest resident who represents

the Urban Forestry Commission. The commission, she says, would like the result to be that regulations are "clear and enforceable."

They should result in "providing good information to the public, planting the right tree in the right place, planting native species whenever practical, a standardization of language in all codes, incentives for property owners to protect significant trees when practical and when not clear guidelines for mitigation (the planting of replacement trees or paying for it to be done elsewhere), reduction in conflict with trees to ensure that they can thrive, and equitable regulations across all property types."

Randy Bonella, the Multnomah Neighborhood Association's new chair, told *The Post*, "A constant source of

comment is people's ability to cut down trees without a permit. We see 100 year

Southwest highways eliminated from streetcar plan

The Streetcar System Project, an effort by the Portland Office of Transportation and Commissioner Sam Adams to determine future streetcar routes, has gradually narrowed the field of possibilities.

In southwest Portland, in fact, the process has eliminated all routes except a proposed extension of the existing line from its current terminus at Southwest Lowell Street to Lake Oswego.

Asked about this at a meeting of the Project Advisory Committee last month, planner Mark Dorn said, "There are only a few viable routes through the west hills, and most of them have very high speeds."

Planners had previously decided that placing streetcars on streets with high

old trees being cut down, and people get pretty upset about it."

speed limits or heavy traffic congestion constituted a safety hazard.

This was the given reason for eliminating proposed routes on Southwest Beaverton-Hillsdale and Capitol highways. The closest new route still proposed is one on Southwest Naito Parkway between Burnside and Arthur streets.

However, planners say the matter is still open, and community support for these facilities is an important factor. The project has scheduled a series of open houses to inform the public of their progress so far and hear feedback. The open house for southwest is 7 to 9 p.m. April 14 at Lincoln High School, 1600 S.W. Salmon St.

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Place-based learning key to new Southwest Charter School

By Polina Olsen
The Southwest Portland Post

When they walked around John's Landing looking for obtuse, acute and right angles, each child kept a clipboard and took two photos for the classroom wall. In fact, the place-based learning program at the Southwest Charter School takes kids into the neighborhood every day.

"The idea behind place-based learning is that if kids understand their immediate surroundings and community then ultimately they're going to care about it and turn into concerned citizens," said Anne Gurnee, education director.

A former director of "OMSI-like" museums in Albuquerque and California, Gurnee lives in the Ashcreek neighborhood and worked for a Portland science education consulting firm before coming to the school.

"It's great to learn about the Amazon Rainforest but it's abstract especially to younger children," said Gurnee. She thinks Portland children should first understand the temperate rainforest where they live and then gradually broaden their knowledge.

Southwest Charter School opened in Fall 2007 after winning approval from the Oregon State Board of Education. They found a building two weeks before classes began. Built in 1954, the 3,500 square foot warehouse once belonged to a clock repair company. Now, children, books and drawings fill the one story building one block west of Southwest Macadam Avenue.

Enrollment increased since opening and now stands at 40 students. "We've had a surprising number of mid-year transfers," said Gurnee. Kindergarten, combined grades first, second and third (123), and combined grades fourth, fifth and sixth (456) make up the three classes. Ultimately, they hope for grades K-8 and 200 students. Their charter limits class size to a maximum of 22.

Today, the staff wears green, and paper shamrocks hang on the walls. It's St. Patrick's Day. The kindergarten class chats loudly as they head out the door. They're on their way to Physical Education class at the nearby Easter Seal Society building, where the school rents extra space.

"I want to teach you one that was new for me," said the young instructor. A Kung Fu expert, he sticks to agility and balance with kindergarteners but teaches Kung Fu to first through sixth graders.

"It's called the Angry Gorilla," he continued as children get ready to jump across the room. "First I face this way, and then I turn all the way around. Your knuckles will touch the ground."

Back in the 123 classroom, the children shouted "We're making a leprechaun city full of traps." Haunting Irish bagpipe music plays softly in the background. According to legend, a trapped leprechaun must reveal the location of his treasure. One girl holds up her paper house complete with bed, pillows and blanket. "If the leprechaun falls asleep, you can grab him," she explained.

Meanwhile, the teacher, Mike Martin, works with one boy on an essay "My Weekend at the Zoo." A corner of



Lisa Colombo (who teaches fourth, fifth, and sixth grades) supervises while Matt Lewinsohn (left) and Lexie Pansky work together on a project. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

the room designated as The Wetlands displays a paper kingfisher and bald eagle.

"At the beginning of the year, the kids built a whole village," Gurnee said. "They were learning how a community works." Every child had a job and owned property. They even gave out tickets for speeding.

According to Gurnee, the innovative curriculum's backbone lies with basics -- reading, writing and mathematics. "It's a mathematical thinking curriculum. It's not a drill and kill where kids are just memorizing," she explained.

The math program, Bridges, is used by several local districts. Reading and writing are built into every day. "Children choose books beyond their read-

ing ability if they're interested in the subject. We encourage kids to follow their reading interest area."

Kindergarten begins the morning with journaling. "They draw a picture about something that's going on in their life or that they're interested in," Gurnee says. The 123 class uses *Writer's Workshop* also common in many local schools. "There's a group of boys writing a series of books on dragons, -- they're up to 12."

Molly Cooper, of John's Landing, sends her daughter, Juliet, to Southwest Charter School's kindergarten. "She learned to read within days of attending," Cooper said. She originally sent Juliet to Capital Hill Elementary but

(Continued on Page 5)

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