

# COMPOST

The Parent Community Organization newsletter of Imagine Environmental Charter School **DECEMBER 2008** Vol. 1, Issue 2

## A letter from **Jon**

As Imagine Environmental Charter School grows we are faced with the exciting challenge of expanding our facilities in a way that will best meet the needs of students, teachers and parents. Subsequently, over the past several months the ECS Board of Trustees, Imagine Schools and Bouma Construction have been developing plans for the expansion of our school. The planned "build out" represents an opportunity to build a state of the art, environmentally friendly educational facility that will serve our community for many generations to come.



Two options for expansion have been considered:

(1) a phased project which would be undertaken over the next two school years with completion scheduled for August 2010 or (2) a single stage K-8 "build out" commencing March 2010 with completion scheduled for August 2010. The ECS Board of Trustees and Imagine Schools agree that option 2, while creating some short term inconveniences, represents the least disruptive course of action for students, staff and parents.

Our immediate need for the 2009/10 school year includes three fourth grade classrooms. This need will be met by installing an environmentally friendly double wide modular classroom in the rear playground that will house both environmental education and a single fourth grade classroom. The remaining two fourth grade classes will utilize the existing science room and what is now the special education room for the 2009/10 school year. If you have any questions or concerns about the construction or expansion timeline please contact the school directly.

## ECS is going [even] greener

**KATE LUCE ANGELL**

*This is the first article in a series of two about the Environmental Charter School's ongoing efforts to carry its environmental mission into every part of the school. This article will cover building and operational issues; the article in the next issue will cover curriculum issues.*

"The core of our program is our environmental curriculum," said Jon McCann during a rare midday break recently.

"But the running of the school in a green and responsible way is one important part of our environmental mission."

While visitors to the school might see the Waste Management recycling and the Abitibi paper collection bins behind the building, Mr. McCann and his fellow Environmental Committee members want you to know there's a lot more than that to their efforts to make Imagine ECS a greener place—and a lot more to come.

Reducing the environmental impact of the school began, said Mr. McCann,

before the doors even opened.

"We purchased all 'green' furniture, made to have low levels of off-gassing," he noted, "and painted the building with all low-VOC paints."

The custodial staff also uses only no-bleach cleaning products, and the bathrooms are stocked with no-perfume soap. School policy also extends to purchasing recycled paper.

**See GREEN, page 5**



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**PCO contact info:**  
parents@ecspco.org

# What a **fabulous fall!**

**KATE LUCE ANGELL**

There's no question the first annual Fall Festival held on October 17 was a success, but the event also said a lot about the kind of school ECS is becoming.

First off, Festival attendees showed they had plenty of school spirit. The Modell brothers, Mason, Cole and Miles, helped prove that by dyeing their hair ECS green for the event.

Chris Anthony said the three, who are in Ms. Rapport's third grade class, Ms. Handron's second grade class and Ms. Meyer's Kindergarten class, respectively, wanted to do something special to cap off Spirit Week.

Of the green dye, Chris assured that "it washes out."

The ECS community also showed its support of the event by turning out in force. The Festival's mastermind, PCO Social Committee chair Angel Lehrian, estimated there were more than 150 people there, including students, parents, teachers and community members.

That number was all the more impressive, she noted, since the Festival was only one event following a weeklong extravaganza that included the Book Fair.

Angel said she conceived of the Festival as a way to end Spirit Week with a bang, to give parents of students an opportunity to meet and to involve the surrounding community.

She also wanted activities that supported the school's mission. "I was looking for things that were natural," she said. "No big moonwalk, just simple fun."

Festivalgoers had a wide variety of nature-themed activities to choose from, whether it was the nature scavenger hunt, the story and music time at the hay bales, or face painting and leaf rubbing.

Judging from the excited participants, the "haunted" walk in the woods was also a favorite, as were the games, pumpkin decorating and the final night of the Book Fair.

When the night got chilly, volunteers helped guests to cookies, popcorn and



Photo: Paul Wossidlo



Photo: Paul Wossidlo



Photo: Kirsi Jansa

hot cider in the cafeteria.

Banjo music was provided by Hal Kaufman, whom many students recognized from his work with the E-Day program.

And no one could miss Principal McCann, who demonstrated that his talents go beyond leadership to tasks such as storytelling and painting ladybugs on students' faces.

Chris Luedde, dad to Brynnie in Ms. Handron's class and Cooper in Ms. Meyer's class, echoed many of the

people at the Festival when he said he thought it had been a success.

"This is a great place to meet a lot of other people," he said. "When you have parents that are really involved, things like this tend to be well-attended and run well."

Angel pointed out that, as with so many of the activities at ECS, parent volunteers were critical to making the Fall Festival go smoothly.

"We'll definitely make this an annual event, but next year I think we'll spread it all out a bit," she said, saying it was tougher getting all the volunteers needed with the Book Fair and Spirit Week going on at the same time.

But the most important thing, she noted, was that everyone had a good time. "People stepped in at the last minute. It's the volunteers that make it happen."

# 10 Ways to green your holidays

1. Be conscious of generating more waste. The average household sees a 25% increase in garbage between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Use regular plates and silverware in addition to cloth napkins at your holiday meals or parties. Plan carefully to reduce excess food and encourage your guests to bring containers to take home leftovers.
2. Instead of purchasing wrapping paper, use recycled materials like newspaper, paper bags or your kid's artwork to wrap gifts. Fabric gift bags are easy to make and can be reused for many years; [care2.com](http://care2.com) features several cute alternatives.
3. Consider waste-free, consumable gifts such as museum or zoo memberships, restaurant gift certificates or theater tickets.
4. The transport of goods for the holidays has a huge impact on the environment. When possible, investigate local food choices for your holiday meals and locally made or grown gifts. Check out [slowfoodpgh.com](http://slowfoodpgh.com) or [edibleallegheeny.com](http://edibleallegheeny.com) for info on local producers of meat and veggies.
5. When shipping gifts or buying online, combine purchases to minimize packaging and delivery truck visits. Reuse shipping materials and add recycled newspaper or popcorn. See more ways to save at [use-less-stuff.com](http://use-less-stuff.com).
6. Investigate sustainable gifts or gifts that support fair trade, such as a subscription for organic fruit or coffee, plant or seeds, or membership in a CSA; [buildingnewhope.org](http://buildingnewhope.org) and [parkseed.com](http://parkseed.com) offer unique ideas.
7. Opt for kid-powered toys to minimize the use of batteries. Batteries represent 20% of the household hazardous material that enter our landfills.
8. Americans purchase 2.65 million holiday cards each year. That's enough to fill a football field 10 stories high. Greener options include repurposing old cards, making a phone call or sending an e-card.
9. If holiday lights are part of your decorating plans, consider replacing older strands with LED lights. Compared to conventional lights, LEDs use 90% less electricity, are more durable and run cooler. Reduce the number of strands and add a timer to save even more energy.
10. Many local nurseries offer potted trees that can be reused for several years or transplanted after the holidays. Cut trees can be recycled into mulch or wildlife habitats. Check out [localharvest.org](http://localharvest.org) for a pesticide free or organically grown tree.

## Get Fresh: A seasonal recipe from John Lash

John Lash is a classically trained chef, previously employed at Oakmont Country Club and Eleven, a fine-dining restaurant in the Strip District. His goal for the Environmental Charter School's lunch program is to create a menu revolving around local, organic, sustainable, nutritious and fun-to-eat foods.



### TORTELLINI SOUP

#### ingredients:

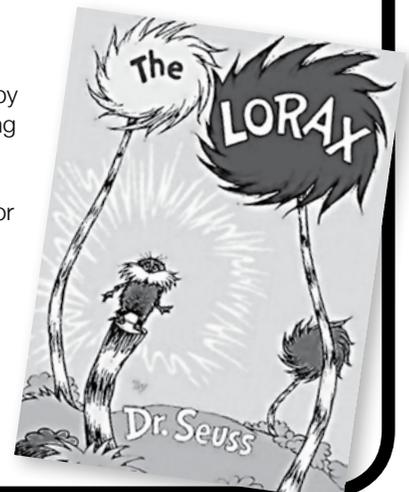
olive oil  
2 or 3 garlic cloves, minced  
1 onion, diced to 1/4 inch  
3 celery stalks, diced to 1/4 inch  
6 carrots, 1/4 inch dice  
2 cups crushed tomatoes  
5 cups chicken or vegetable stock  
1 Tbsp dried basil  
2 cups frozen cheese tortellini  
Parmesan cheese

#### directions:

1. In heavy stock pot, sauté garlic & onions until opaque. Add celery and carrots. Sauté until flavor is released.
2. Add tomatoes and stock. Bring to a boil. Lower heat to simmer. Cook for about 30 minutes.
3. Check doneness of carrots and celery. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Add tortellini and basil. Simmer until pasta is cooked.  
*Diced chicken can be added if desired.*
5. Serve with Parmesan cheese.

### BOOK OF THE MONTH: *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss

The Principal's Book of the Month is *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss. Using his signature whimsical rhyming lyrics, Dr. Seuss shows the importance of only using and buying what we need. As trees are chopped down at alarming rates to make way for useless products, our hero the Lorax describes how an ecosystem is impacted when we take resources from the earth and pollute the earth during production. This tale that was written in 1971 rings true today and shows us the environmental wisdom of one of America's favorite children's authors.



# What's **going on** here? (LOCAL FUN FOR YOUR FAMILY)

**Throughout December**  
Children's Museum  
Hand Made: Gift-making  
Studio

*Make affordable, one-of-a-kind gifts and cloth gift bags for "green" gift wrapping for holiday gifts at our new gift-making center in the Studio. Make a different gift every day!*  
Monday: Beading  
Tuesday: Tie Dyeing  
Wednesday: Gift Bag Sewing  
Thursday: Leather Crafting  
Friday: Bookmaking  
Saturday: Mosaic Design  
Sunday: Ceramics

**Every Sat. and Sun.,  
12:30-4:30 p.m.**

Carnegie Museum of Art presents: ARTventures, Drop-in Family Art-making  
*Looking for a fun way to enjoy the museum together? Drop in for treasure hunts, art-making and more in the galleries. Follow the signs to a new museum location each month.*

**Saturdays in December:  
13 and 20**

Carnegie Science Center's Breakfast Express 2008  
*A new holiday tradition! Bring the whole family for a heartwarming morning of trains, stories and holiday spirit. Breakfast Express includes a piping-hot breakfast, a morning of activities and crafts, a showing of The Polar Express: The IMAX® Experience in the Rangos Omnimax Theater and private time in the Miniature Railroad & Village. Don't miss this special opportunity to meet our celebrity guest, Mr. McFeely from Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood.*

**December 13**

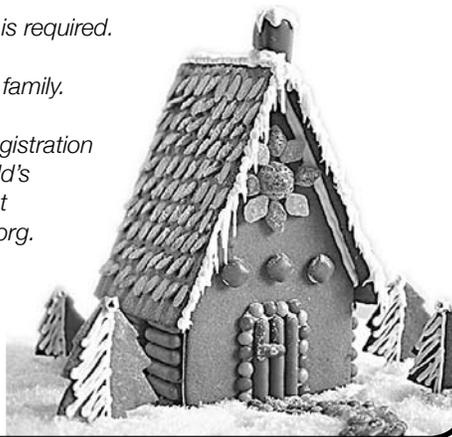
Venture Outdoors "Urban Safari" Hike  
*Leave the Land Rover behind as we strike out on foot for a day in the urban jungle. These overland expeditions*

## **Gingerbread Making Event December 12, 6-8 p.m.**

*Pre-registration is required.*

*Cost is \$10 per family.*

*Look for your registration form in your child's folder or contact [angel@ecspco.org](mailto:angel@ecspco.org).*



*are somewhat challenging, moving at a moderate pace for 8 or 9 miles, with occasional hills. We'll stop along the way to explore landmarks and learn about the city's history. Watch for turkeys, cyclists and other wild game. Bring a lunch and your sense of adventure!*  
Location: North Side  
Difficulty: Moderate  
Time: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Cost: \$10 non-member / \$5 member

**Saturday, December 13  
10 a.m - 12 p.m.**

NMRWA's Winter Tree Identification  
Frick Park, Biddle St. parking lot. Don your winter woollies to learn how to identify trees and shrubs from their bark, branching and buds. For more information or to register visit the NMRWA website or contact the NMRWA at 412-371-8779 or [info@ninemilerun.org](mailto:info@ninemilerun.org).

**December 14**

Venture Outdoors Doggie Day Trek  
*We'll start out with some social time for our dogs to get to know each other, and then we'll cover 5-6 miles on various trails throughout*

*local parks, stopping for a snack along the way. Please remember, only 2 dogs per person, leashes required (off-leash time will be included). Dogs must have current vaccinations. Bring dog food, water and bags to clean up after your doggie.*  
Location: South Park  
Difficulty: Moderate  
Time: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Cost: \$15 non-member / \$8 member

**December 26 through 30**  
Family Fun Days at Phipps

*Join us from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for crafts, discovery activities and fun! Free with paid admission to Phipps.*

**December 20 and 21**  
Paper Making at Phipps

*Just in time for the holidays, learn how to turn old junk mailings into beautiful handmade papers! Reuse and recycle holiday cards and bills to make some surprisingly inexpensive stationary gift sets. 2 p.m.*

also at Phipps:

**December 31**

*Ring in the New Year at Phipps! From 6 to 9 p.m.*

*your whole family can enjoy live music, carnival games and crafts. Participate in an early countdown at 8:45 p.m. complete with noisemakers. Free with paid admission to Phipps.*

**December 31**

Noon Year's Eve Celebration  
Ring in the New Year with the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium and Radio Disney. Join us in the PPG Aquarium from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for a Noon Year's Eve Celebration of Time Square proportion. Count down to 12 noon with Radio Disney DJ's, make noisemakers and party hats, enjoy live entertainment and help count down for a special ball drop.

*Sponsored by Radio Disney AM540, Yellow Book USA, and PA Cyber Charter School.*

**January 1**

Carnegie Science Center's Mess Fest  
*Each year, we get bigger, louder and messier! Get ready for Jell-O geysers and pools of goop! Mark your calendar and don't dress up—MessFest is a New Year's Day extravaganza that you won't want to miss! All activities are free with admission.*

**January 11**

Natural Cold Remedies at Phipps 1:30 p.m.  
*Winter and colds go hand in hand. Learn about natural home remedies.*

**January 25**

Edible Sprouts at Phipps 1:30 p.m. Supplement your winter diet by learning to grow fresh and nutritious sprouts at home.

For more information visit <http://phipps.conservatory.org>

# ECS is going greener with energy, composting

## GREEN, from page 1

Many other green efforts are just now swinging into action, said Mr. McCann, like the beginning of small-scale worm composting efforts in kindergarten, first grade and second grade classrooms.

While the wrigglers only eat a small amount of kitchen waste, the hope is to eventually expand the program, said third grade Instructional Aide Rachel Sica, who is a member of the Environmental Committee.

“Right now it’s just things like the apples that don’t get eaten during snack,” she said. “But the potential is there to grow.”

Large-scale worm composters can cost thousands of dollars, noted Rachel, so the program will stay small until funds can be found to expand it.

She said the idea for worm composting, as well as most of the other ideas for greening ECS, had its genesis in the meetings Mr. McCann and the Environmental Committee hold every two weeks.

Board President Barbara Hicks and Vice-President Paul Wiegman sit on the committee, along with Second Grade Instructional Aide Eva Barinas and PCO Secretary Marla Ferrancy. Environmental Specialist Nikole Sheaffer also provides suggestions and helps spread the word about new efforts in Morning Meeting.

Rachel pointed out some important facts about the big bins behind the school.

The single-stream Waste Management recycling bin doesn’t just accept paperboard and Type 1 through 5 plastic, like Pittsburgh’s recycling program.

“We’re able to recycle plastic types up to 7, and we can do milk cartons, too,” she said. There are bins in every classroom to collect recyclables and students are learning the wide range of what can be recycled.

And Rachel encourages people to dump their junk mail, including stapled circulars, office paper and newspapers, into the school’s Abitibi bin.



“We get \$5 per ton, but if we have a month where we bring in four tons, that jumps to \$15,” she said. “So bring in those holiday catalogs!”

The Abitibi company states that for every ton of paper collected, 7,000 gallons of water, 4,102 Kwh electricity, 60 pounds of greenhouse gases, 390 gallons of oil, 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space and 17 trees are saved.

But recycling is only part of the story, said Mr. McCann. The school also needs to ensure that it’s saving energy and being environmentally responsible on the front end.

“I’m hoping the Board will adopt a resolution we have to buy power from alternative energy sources, like wind,” he said. To offset the higher average cost of that energy, it’s possible the school could use the power company’s logo on school materials.

A school-wide energy audit is also in the works, as well as a digital energy reader students can use to keep track of their energy use, and conduct their own energy audit.

“That way,” said Mr. McCann, “the students will see the impact of the decisions they make every day.”

Rachel said future plans included installing a dishwasher in the cafeteria so the Food Services staff could employ reusable dishes and planting native plants around the school to create a wildlife habitat.

Mr. McCann emphasized efforts to make the school a greener place would evolve and expand over time, with parental and student input. But he also pointed out that not every suggestion could be put into action right away.

In the meantime, Imagine ECS students are learning how to recycle in their classrooms and reduce waste at lunchtime.

“They’re so helpful with these efforts,” said Rachel. “Students are really getting behind these programs. And the stuff that’s coming is just more for them to get excited about.”

# You are here. Volunteer.

Volunteers at ECS are given many unique opportunities; they peek behind the scenes as each successful school day unfolds, network with other talented and engaging professionals while contributing their own unique skill sets, enjoy the camaraderie and support of other busy parents, and are often privileged as the first witness to amazing moments of growth and success in our students' lives. ComPOST received many responses from our volunteers when we asked: What was your favorite volunteer moment so far?. Here are just a few responses:

“ Although it's not the only reason I volunteer, I love seeing my daughter's face light up when I show up in her classroom to help out! ”

— Tania Lyon

“ My most favorite volunteer moment was during the Pumpkin Parade when I witnessed Mr. McCann (a.k.a. The Great Pumpkin) get momentarily stuck while trying to squeeze through the narrow Henrietta Street doors in his costume to lead the parade! I was reminded that our school is a fun (and frequently funny) and happy place to be and that our principal is willing to very much be a part of that. ”

— Kate Brennan

“ My favorite volunteer moment was playing freeze tag with my son's second grade class. I started to play with my son and his friend. Within minutes, children who barely know me were running up and asking if they could play too. By the end of the recess we had almost the whole class involved — they were working together as a team, taking turns and expending a ton of energy! I was exhausted but it was worth it to hear them all so excited and engaged in play together! ”

— Tara Deringor

“ My favorite volunteer moment thus far happened while volunteering in the library, on October 28, during the 3rd grade classes. The library hosted 2 outside speakers, who performed a mock presidential debate... To hear our 3rd grade students ask serious questions about the economy, crime and the environment showed me that our school has some of the great thinkers and problem solvers of tomorrow! ”

— Stephanie Land

“ My favorite volunteer moment was doing face-painting at the Fall Festival. Even though I wasn't very good, the kids were happy! ”

— Laurie Kellem

“ I just love how sweet all the kids are at school! One day when I was making the PCO bulletin board I had many classes walk by me. All of them had kids that gave me a big smile and wave. I didn't know most of them yet they were so friendly. As I have been around my class more often I have been the recipient of hugs which always melt my heart. ”

— Beth Lott

ECS has many unique opportunities to work with our students, help with fundraising or donate special talents outside of the classroom. Please visit [www.environmentalcharterschool.org](http://www.environmentalcharterschool.org) (Parent Involvement and Resources) or e-mail [parentinvolvement@ecspco.org](mailto:parentinvolvement@ecspco.org).

# Easy Ways to help your school grow

## 1. ORGANIC, SHADE-GROWN, FAIR TRADE COFFEE FOR SALE

The PCO is partnering with a local non-profit organization called Building New Hope to bring a unique monthly fundraiser to ECS. Building New Hope's signature coffee roasted to a light French roast, yielding a medium body, crisp, full flavor cup of coffee comes directly from El Porvenir, a farming cooperative in Nicaragua. Buying this coffee guarantees fair market and living wages for the farmers. The farmers use recognized proper environmental practices from planting through processing. Shade-grown coffee reduces soil erosion and maintains a biologically diverse habitat for plants, birds and other wildlife. The coffee is certified organically grown by the OCIA (Organic Crop Improvement Association). Also available is a decaffeinated organic, fair trade coffee, using a chemical-free water process, from cooperatives throughout Latin America. Read more at [www.buildingnewhope.org/coffee.html](http://www.buildingnewhope.org/coffee.html).

**ECS is making a 50% return on this fundraiser. At \$13/lb, this is an easy way to support our school and drink some great coffee!**

Starting in January, we will take monthly coffee orders by the 15th of each month for delivery around the 1st of the following month. Order forms are available online at [www.environmentalcharterschool.org](http://www.environmentalcharterschool.org).

## 2. AMAZON.COM

When you do your holiday shopping or everyday shopping at Amazon.com, be sure to click the Amazon link on the ECS website at [www.environmentalcharterschool.org](http://www.environmentalcharterschool.org). Then complete your purchase at Amazon.com and ECS will receive 6-8% of your purchase at no extra cost to you.

## 3. PAPER RECYCLING

The school now has an Abitibi Paper Retriever, the green and yellow bin in the playground area behind the school. Please bring your newspapers, magazines, office paper, catalogs and junk mail to recycle. Do not include phone books, cardboard, plastic, glass, metals or trash. ECS earns money for every ton of paper collected.

## 4. CARTRIDGES FOR KIDS

Look for a receptacle in the school office to donate ink cartridges, old cell phones and other electronics for recycling. ECS will receive money for them. More info at [www.cartridgesforkids.com](http://www.cartridgesforkids.com)

## 5. GIANT EAGLE APPLES FOR THE STUDENTS

The easiest way to enroll is by phone and it takes about 30 seconds. Call 1-800-474-4777, enter your Advantage Card number and our school ID# 5305. You may register online at [www.gianteagle.com](http://www.gianteagle.com). You must use your Advantage Card when you shop for our school to receive credit.

## 6. BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

Clip box tops from participating General Mills products: Betty Crocker, Yoplait, Progresso, Old El Paso, Pillsbury, etc. You may send them in with your child or place them in the designated box in the auditorium. For a complete list of products go to [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com).

## 7. TARGET

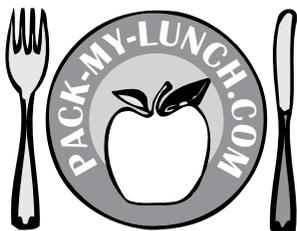
ECS will receive a percentage of your purchase in the form of a cash donation from Target through the Take Charge of Education program. Just visit [target.com/tcoe](http://target.com/tcoe), or call 1-800-316-6142 to designate our school. Our school ID is 149779. Then use your Target Visa or Target Card every time you shop.

## 8. OFFICE DEPOT

Office Depot's 5% Back to Schools Program will allow ECS to get free office supplies. You simply have to give your school name or ID when purchasing in-store or online. Past purchases made within the current quarter can still be entered for credit! If you forget to give the school name or ID at point of purchase, you can call 866-322-3225 and they can credit the school.

Questions or suggestions? E-mail [fundraising@ecspco.org](mailto:fundraising@ecspco.org).

**Would you like to provide your child with a wholesome, delicious packed lunch every day?**



*Pack-My-Lunch is a mother-owned catering business delivering great lunches directly to ECS. We pack the lunches that you would pack if you had the time to.*

**Visit [Pack-My-Lunch.com](http://Pack-My-Lunch.com) for more information.**



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**P A I R . C O M**

# 5

## QUESTIONS

Get to know an ECS community member better through five inane questions...this month, **Shannon Merenstein, Art Guru.**

### 1. Most creative Halloween costume?

I thought my Tooth Fairy costume was pretty good this year. I always end up making a silly costume last minute using odds and ends from any local thrift store. This year I stapled paper teeth onto a borrowed tutu, wore my most colorful rainboots, and piled on anything glittery. It's more fun than buying a costume, for sure.

**2. Beatles or Stones?** Too hard to choose. I'll go with the Beatles for this publication. I love George Harrison.

**3. Who would play you in a movie about ECS?** Christina Ricci?

### 4. What's the most unusual recycled object you have used in artwork?

I made a gigantic octopus from bread tags, grocery store bags, and other strange odds and ends. Our students are experimenting with materials from Creative Reuse Pittsburgh – everything from unused QTips to paint chips to Little League trophy parts. Very inspiring!

### 5. Funniest teaching moment so far?

Honestly, there is always a funny teaching moment. I am privileged to know each student at school, and since I teach all of them, it's too hard to pinpoint just one. Once I was teaching a kindergarten class and we were talking about our

favorite animals, and one student said "a cousin!" I thought I heard incorrectly and asked her to repeat herself, but she was insistent. When I just recently had a haircut, a student said, "What happened to you!!??" I could go on for awhile...



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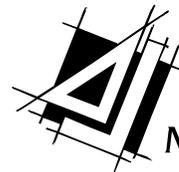
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# Top 5 Most **Unusual** Teacher Wishes:

1) 12 small flashlights



2) cotton balls



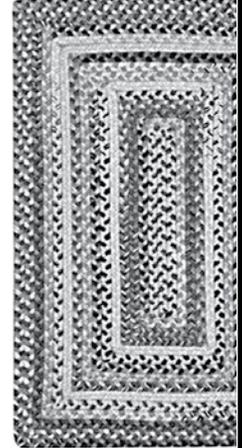
3) canisters of plain oatmeal



4) **BIG** pillows



5) a 5x7 carpet



For details and to see all the items currently on our teachers' wish lists, please visit [www.environmentalcharterschool.org](http://www.environmentalcharterschool.org). Then, make **YOUR** contribution of a much-needed item for our children's classrooms today!

 **Children's**  
Community Pediatrics

## GIL Pediatrics

6343 Penn Avenue, Suite 201, Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
(Located at the Village of Eastside, above Trader Joe's)

**INTRODUCING...**

**the FIRST environmentally sustainable medical office in the Pittsburgh region**

Children's Community Pediatrics-GIL is dedicated to providing **warm and comprehensive medical care in a greener, healthier office** for infants, children, adolescents and young adults. Our state-of-the-art green office includes special windows and skylights, an airflow-control ventilation system, natural fiber carpeting, bright low-toxin paints and an aquarium ecosystem.

**NEW!**

**Acute Care Office Hours**

Acute Care hours are offered from November through March for established patients. No appointment is necessary. Patients are seen in order of arrival.

**For additional information, or to schedule an appointment, please call 412-363-2200.**

Visit GIL Pediatrics at [www.cc-peds.net/gil\\_ped/overview.shtm](http://www.cc-peds.net/gil_ped/overview.shtm)

# Green Tips:

In this issue, The Sierra Club offers tips for pet owners.



## Tip #1: Scoop that Poop

Americans own approximately 74.8 million dogs and an estimated 40 percent of pet owners don't clean up their dogs' doo. Those piles don't just "disappear" – rain washes unscooped poop into storm sewers, which drain into local rivers and bays, contaminating the water with such nasties as E. coli, fecal coliform bacteria, salmonella and giardia. Bottom line: use biodegradable bags, and pick it up, every time.

## Tip #2: Adopt Responsibly

Animal shelters have seen a spike in the number of pets being abandoned and given up for adoption in recent weeks as a result of shrinking household budgets. In what's been called the "foreclosure pet" phenomenon, some pets have even been found abandoned inside foreclosed homes. Visit [pets911.com](http://pets911.com) for more information.

## Tip #3: Chew on Organics

Even if it's not contaminated with melamine, conventional pet food is often made from low-grade animal by-products, including meat from diseased livestock. Choose certified organic pet foods, which contain no pesticides, hormones, antibiotics or artificial ingredients.

## Advertise in comPOST

The Parent Community Organization newsletter of Imagine Environmental Charter School is distributed to every family attending ECS in addition to many Partner Organizations and a broad range of community support groups. ComPOST is also available online at [www.environmentalcharterschool.org/](http://www.environmentalcharterschool.org/)

### Insertion Fees:

1/8 pg (3 5/8" w x 2 3/8" h) .....	\$15
1/4 pg (3 5/8" w x 4 7/8" h) .....	\$24
1/2 pg (7 1/2" w x 4 7/8" h) .....	\$42
full pg (7 1/2" w x 10" h) .....	\$80

### Deadlines:

All materials are due the 1st of each month for publication in the next month's issue.

### Submission Guides:

Preferred ad format: high-resolution, press-optimized PDF file. Acceptable formats: InDesign, Quark, Photoshop and Illustrator. For a small fee, we will design your ad!

### Send inquiries/files to:

[newsletter@ecspco.org](mailto:newsletter@ecspco.org)

DUE  
AT ECS  
DEC.23

## Win a Playground For Our Students

Stonyfield Farms and KaBOOM! have teamed up to build two new playgrounds this year, and, with ECS parents' help **we could win one of them.** The school has partnered with the East-End Food Co-op to collect specially-marked lids from Stonyfield Farm 6 oz. and 32 oz. yogurts between now and December 31st.

**START COLLECTING TODAY!** The group that collects the most lids will win. Collect lids in your home, at your office, and from friends. Drop the Stonyfield lids in the special marked boxes at the Co-op or in the back of the ECS auditorium.



For more information visit: <http://kaboom.org/stonyfield> or e-mail: [parents@ecspco.org](mailto:parents@ecspco.org).

Visit our contest partners at [www.eastendfoodcoop.com](http://www.eastendfoodcoop.com)



# Sports + Recreation @ ECS

Sports and recreation clubs have begun at ECS. The following clubs are currently open to second and third graders:



Photo: Felicia Turano

## **Current schedule:**

**Soccer club** meets at 3:30 in the gym. Second grade meets on Tuesdays; third grade meets on Thursdays. Contact Mr. McCann for more info.

**Cross Country** meets in the gym at 3:30 on Wednesdays. Contact Mr. Bey for more info.

**Chess Club** meets on Thursdays at 12:30 in the cafeteria. Contact Mr. McCann for more info.

**Robotics** meets after school on Mondays. Contact Mr. Burke for more info.

## **In January:**

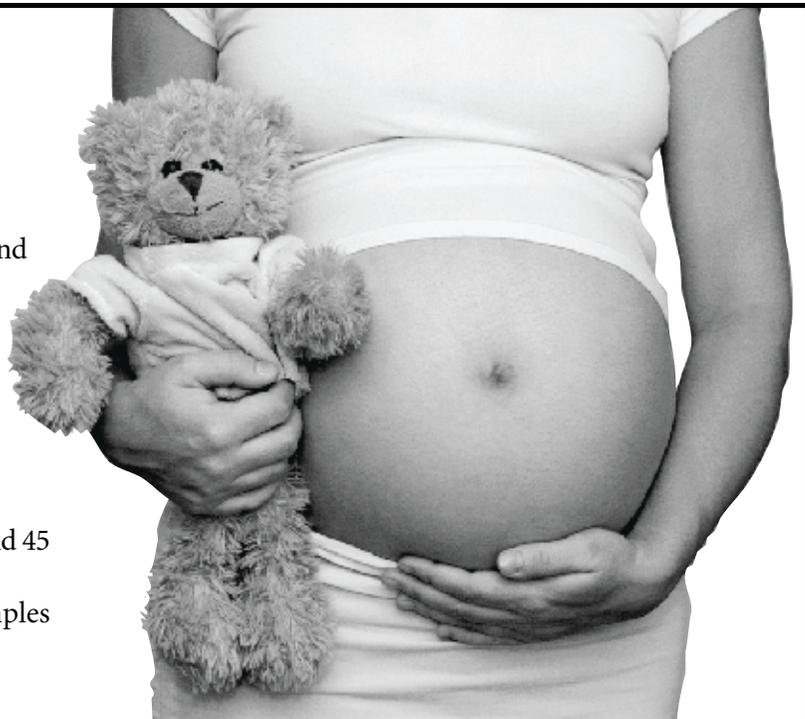
**Basketball and Deck Hockey** will start in January on the weekends for all grades. Basketball will be on Saturdays and deck hockey on Sundays. Contact Mr. Bey for more info.

## Are You Pregnant?

You can help researchers at the University of Pittsburgh understand how your sleep affects your pregnancy. Participants will be compensated.

You may qualify if:

- You are 6-10 weeks pregnant for the first time
- You are between the ages of 18 and 45
- In generally good health
- Willing to provide 3 blood samples



## **For additional information, contact:**

Michele Okun, Ph.D. at 412 586-9434 • [okunml@upmc.edu](mailto:okunml@upmc.edu) or  
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# E stands for much more than "extended"

## KRISTAN ABESHOUSE

E-Day, the after school program at Imagine ECS, has been providing a safe and fun place for many of our students to finish their school day while their parents finish their workday. E-day cares for over 45 students throughout the week with a dedicated staff that brings their unique talents to the program to enrich the experience for the children.



Each day of the week brings a new activity for the children to participate in with their fellow classmates. A typical week includes hands-on environmental education projects, art class using a variety of mediums including hard to recycle items, and board games and puzzles to reinforce teamwork and good sportsmanship. In addition to these weekly activities, the kindergartens have daily art time while the 1-3 graders attend a homework lab to get a head start on their nightly assignments. The day is wrapped up by free playtime in the gymnasium, which every child needs after a full day at school.

Amy Bianco, the director deputy of E-Day, is dedicated to reflecting the school's mission in the E-Day program. Each week she researches a topic and provides a theme to craft the

lesson plans around. The themes have included bugs, the world and its water, worms, and autumn just to name a few, and the children have responded well to learning in E-Day. In fact, one third grader was overheard by a teacher telling another third grader, "You should really come to E-Day. It's fun and we learn cool stuff too." You can't beat that kind of testimony.

As the school year progresses, so will E-Day. We look forward to the New Year and the new topics we'll teach the children, and of course, what they will teach us. We'll keep you posted and if E-Day could fill a need in your family please don't hesitate to contact us about enrollment.

*You may email inquiries to kristan.abeshouse@imagineschools.com.*

# comPOST

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